

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

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I. 2015 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 916 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 459 (50%) are professionals, 436 (48%) are students/unemployed/emeritus, and 21 (2%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Previous years' attendance (at the time of my report) was 807 in 2014 (San Francisco); 991 in 2013 (New York City), 698 in 2012 (Denver), 696 in 2011 (Las Vegas), 563 in 2010 (Atlanta), 663 in 2009 (San Francisco), 731 in 2008 (Boston), and 726 in 2007 (New York City).

We have 173 sessions scheduled with 730 papers, 41 panelists, 2 workshop facilitators, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 159 sessions scheduled with 643 papers, 22 panelists, 1 workshop facilitator, 3 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 15 guests registered. Last year at this time, 17 guests had registered. The guests are not included in the total number of registered attendees.

II. ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

SSSP has taken steps to meet 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. While we requested that housekeeping use unscented products in the bathrooms on the meeting space levels, they are unable to do this. They use Dial Basics, a hypoallergenic liquid hand soap with a very light scent. 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. We received six requests from conference attendees. The requests include wheelchair accessibility and conference name badges for partners or personal care attendants who are accompanying attendees and assisting them.

Since 2010, members and meeting registrants have been able to donate to the Accessibility Services Fund when they register. This year, contributions of \$270 were received (\$275 in 2014; \$566 in 2013; \$225 in 2012; and \$235 in 2011).

The Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel will designate the men's restroom on the Atlantic Ballroom function space (Level One) as gender-neutral.

The Comfort Zone will be located in the Red Sea on Friday and the Theater Room on Saturday and Sunday. This space will provide a quiet environment for conference attendees to relax, reflect, and re-energize. This space is available to all conference attendees, no matter where they are staying.

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 EFFORTS

In an effort to increase advertisements in the final program, a personalized letter was sent to those who advertised last year. In addition, seventy-four publishing companies were contacted. An additional letter was sent to sixteen publishing companies participating in the book exhibit. A letter was sent to 143 Ph.D. granting departments. Finally, a congratulatory letter was sent to all of the publishers of the C. Wright Mills finalists encouraging them to advertise.

Ads were placed in the final program by Indiana University Press, Madison Area Technical College, SAGE Publications, University of Cincinnati, University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, University of North Carolina Wilmington, and the Wayne State University. In addition, we offered to put an insert in each registrant's conference bag for a fee. The Nature Publishing Group placed an order. As a result of these efforts, \$2,550 in advertising revenue was generated. Last year, nine ads were sold and two inserts were placed, totaling \$2,600.

IV. ANNUAL MEETING EXEMPTION POLICY

Twenty-one annual meeting exemptions were requested and granted this year (15 in 2014; 39 in 2013; 29 in 2012; and 22 in 2011).

Current Exemption Policy:

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

In order to expedite registration, the e-mail of acceptance specifies that participation is contingent on current SSSP membership and 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.

The Administrative Office will process all qualified exemption requests for conference registration (under a-d in registration exemption rules) 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 (under e in registration exemption rules).

All exemption requests must be submitted by May 15. Exemptions from paying registration fees will be considered 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 to make a presentation.
- c. Non-U.S. and non-Canadian scholars who are from less advantaged countries.
- d. Co-authors of papers who will not be attending the meeting. One of the co-authors must be a paid registrant. Both co-authors must pay if both expect to attend the meeting.
- e. Persons excused by direct request of the Program Committee Chair.

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 (and the connection cord if they have an Apple computer or HDMI connection cord) or arrange with someone else in their session to share. Internet access will be available in the meeting space, courtesy of the hotel.

After soliciting bids from four audio-visual companies (including the in-house company), we signed with Advanced Solutions, LLC (AS). AS provided our audio-visual needs in 2012. The total projected audio-visual charge is \$11,350 (\$10,450 audio-visual equipment rental, \$500 miscellaneous audio-visual needs, and \$400 hotel load in/load out privileges charge). In 2014 (San Francisco), it cost \$16,579; in 2013 (New York City), it cost \$13,637; 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 CEREMONY

At the 2014 Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors voted to eliminate the Awards Banquet and replace it with a combined Awards Ceremony followed by the Division-Sponsored Reception. The Awards Ceremony will include the presentations of the annual SSSP awards (C. Wright Mills Award, Lee Founders Award, Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship, Joseph B. Gittler Award, Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Scholarship, and the Thomas C. Hood Social Action Award) and the Student Paper Competition winners. Each student paper competition winner and all major award winners and honorable mentions will be presented with a plaque, handled through the Administrative Office.

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 of five books. The Society purchased the sixth book, so all books will be on display.

VIII. CATERING

During contract negotiations, Héctor and I negotiated a 10% discount on 2015 catering menu pricing; coffee and herbal tea at a charge of \$50 per gallon (regular price: \$120 per gallon), including service charge and tax; and a 3% rebate off all charges that appear on the master bill. The Society will spend approximately \$45,000 on food and beverage (including 24% service charge and 10.5% sales tax).

We will hold the Arrival Meet & Greet Reception on Thursday evening, the Welcoming Reception on Friday evening, and the Division-Sponsored Reception on Saturday evening. The Membership and Outreach Committee will host the New Member Breakfast on Saturday morning. I encouraged all 22 Divisions to co-sponsor a joint reception instead of hosting their own. Twenty divisions responded that they would and agreed to contribute \$3,545 toward the cost of the \$14,038 reception. The Drinking and Drugs Division (off-site) and the Society and Mental Health Division will hold their own receptions.

IX. CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

On Monday, August 24, the International Coalition against Sexual Harassment will hold a conference from 7:30am–6:00pm at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel. There is no charge for SSSP registrants with a SSSP name badge. Currently, 27 SSSP registrants have registered.

On Monday, August 24, the Institutional Ethnography Division will hold a workshop from 9:00am–4:30pm at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel. Currently, 36 people have registered.

X. DONATIONS

A special thanks to the Executive Vice President for Planning of Wright State University and the Sage journal *Critical Sociology* for their financial contributions to program activities and to Oxford University Press for its financial contribution to the conference bags.

XI. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM

The Lee Student Support Fund Committee coordinated the Meeting Mentor Program. Sixty-three attendees requested a meeting mentor. Thanks to the hard work of Bhoomi K. Thakore and her committee, all requests were honored. The 2015 Meeting Mentors are: Tim Berard, Joel Best, Samit Dipon Bordoloi, Jared Del Rosso, David G. Embrick, Daina Cheyenne Harvey, Keith M. Kilty, Lloyd Klein, Valerie Leiter, Andrew S. London, Donileen R. Loseke, Maralee Mayberry, Ligaya Lindio McGovern, Nancy J. Mezey, Glenn W. Muschert, Pamela Anne Quiroz, Anna Maria Santiago, Saher Selod, Wendy Simonds, Hephzibah Strmic-Pawl, Bhoomi K. Thakore, Courtney S. Thomas, and Dennis Watson.

XII. MOBILE APP

After hearing from the 2014 Program Co-Chairs Robert Silverman and Kelly Patterson, the Board of Directors voted to forward the issue of a mobile-friendly conference program, including the feasibility and cost, to IT Specialist Sharon Shumaker for her investigation and subsequent report before the end of the 2014 calendar year. Sharon identified two vendors who would enhance our printed program, offer enough features to meet our current and future needs, and have the ability to encourage attendee networking. The Board approved CrowdCompass and we signed a two year contract agreement with them. We're very excited to unveil the mobile app at this year's meeting.

XIII. OPTIONAL TOURS

This year, SSSP is partnering with the American Sociological Association (ASA) and is pleased to offer four co-sponsored tours. All tour tickets cost \$35 per person and we were limited to 10 tickets per tour. Kareem Jenkins, ASA Director of Meeting Services, took care of all logistical details. Due to low ticket sales for two tours, SSSP will pay the difference, so all four co-sponsored tours can take place.

National Museum of Mexican Art and Public Mural Tour in the Pilsen Neighborhood

Saturday, August 22 from 10:30am–12:30pm

Transportation: Chartered Motorcoach (loading at Radisson: 10:00am, unloading at Radisson: 1:00pm)

Currently, 9 tickets have been sold.

The Hull House Museum

Saturday, August 22, 2:30pm–5:00pm

Transportation: Chartered Motorcoach (loading at Radisson: 2:00pm, unloading at Radisson: 5:30pm)

Currently, 8 tickets have been sold.

Urban Gorillas: A Tour of the Regenstein Center for African Apes at Lincoln Park Zoo

Sunday, August 23, 10:00am–12:00pm

Transportation: Chartered Motorcoach (loading at Radisson: 9:30am, unloading at Radisson: 12:30pm)

Currently, 4 tickets have been sold.

The Bronzeville Historical Tour: The Underground Railroad Trolley Tour

Sunday, August 23, 1:00pm–3:30pm

Transportation: Chartered Trolley (loading at Radisson: 12:30pm, unloading at Radisson: 4:00pm)

Currently, 8 tickets have been sold.

XIV. RADISSON BLU AQUA HOTEL

SSSP received a favorable sleeping room rate of \$209 single/double; \$234 triple; and \$259 quadruple plus tax per night when the hotel contract was signed. Based on the Lowest Room Rate clause in our hotel contract, "our rate will never exceed 95% of the lowest advertised American Sociological Association's standard single/double rate, regardless of the stated rate," our room rates were reduced to: \$185.25 single/double; \$210.25 triple; and \$235.25 quadruple plus tax per night.

On August 4, our room pickup was 831 rooms. The Society will receive 21 complimentary room nights. As long as we exceed 80% of our 725 room block (580 rooms), the Society will not be charged meeting room rental.

The hotel offers free internet access. High-speed and/or wireless internet access is free of charge for all guests throughout the hotel.

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. REGISTRATION

At the 2014 Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors approved a policy that program participants will be dropped from the Annual Meeting program, if they do not register by June 1 of that year. The Board requests that program participants receive at least three notices prior to the June 1 deadline for registration.

The Administrative Office sent three targeted e-mail reminders to program participants and asked session organizers to contact their participants who had not registered and urge them to register. In addition, Program Co-Chairs David

G. Embrick and Bandana Purkayastha sent two e-mails urging program participants to register. On July 17, there were 24 program participants who had not registered for the conference despite multiple attempts to remind them. All 24 were removed from the program.

XVI. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE

Seven graduate student members will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, four will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 20-22 and three will be paid an hourly wage.

Twenty-nine registrants requested the roommate matching service. On July 1, 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.

XVII. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Kim Enderle, Senior Conference Services Manager. I provided her 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 fortunate to work with President Marlese Durr; Program Committee Co-Chairs David G. Embrick and Bandana Purkayastha; Local Arrangements Committee Chair Nancy Michaels; Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado; Information Technology Specialist Sharon Shumaker; Administrative Assistant Marisa Stone; and Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster Douglas Oeser. I am thankful for their invaluable contributions to the program. 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 as meeting manager. On October 19, I will celebrate my twenty-third anniversary with SSSP. I have been privileged to witness the growth of the organization under the guidance of many outstanding leaders. I welcome the opportunity to continue this service next year in Seattle.