

## **SSSP Graduate Student Meeting**

**Friday, August 11, 2017 2:30pm**

**Frontenac**

Submitted by Graduate Student Representatives to the Board of Directors, Sarah St. John, Maria Duenas (incoming), and Kasey Henricks (outgoing).

### **Welcome and Introductions**

For the second year in a row, the Graduate Student Meeting was held in the afternoon instead of during the first session of the day. However, this did not particularly contribute to attendance considering 7 students were in attendance this year, compared to 19 in 2016 when the meeting was initially moved to the afternoon from the 8:30 time slot. Attendance has varied in past years, from 8 in 2015 and 2013 to 20 attendees in 2014. All participants in the meeting were first time attendees, not only at the Graduate Student Meeting, but at the SSSP annual meeting as well. The majority were in their first year of a Master's or PhD program, with about half of the participants coming from departments outside of sociology.

### **Graduate Student Feedback**

Student Representatives discussed their own experiences with SSSP, why they consider it as their organizational "home," the different service options available for students to get involved, some of the various SSSP opportunities available for professional development (e.g., mentoring program, Lee Support Fund, Beth Hess Scholarship, Race/Ethnicity Scholarship, Student Paper Awards), and the mission of SSSP, focusing on its dedication to graduate student involvement. Those in attendance were encouraged to attend the Graduate Student Happy Hour, New Member Breakfast, and division meetings and receptions. Students mentioned two main types of workshops they were interested in seeing next year; the first being a more traditional type of panel comprised of faculty members, while the second was a networking event among current graduate members of SSSP. The suggested panel would offer perspectives of faculty members who had served on hiring committees from various types of academic institutions to hear what types of learning experiences they prioritized most while making hiring decisions. The networking event would focus on making interdisciplinary connections among people who are looking to build relationships and publish with scholars outside their discipline.

Other feedback from attendees focused on scheduling difficulties of the different graduate student focused activities. Specifically, those in attendance would prefer that the Graduate Student Happy Hour be scheduled earlier, directly following other receptions instead of having a gap of several hours. Additionally, the difficulty of having the Graduate Student Happy hour the night before the New Member breakfast was highlighted by attendees. Some participants expressed that the current scheduling made them feel they had to choose to attend only one of these activities, since the Graduate Student Happy Hour went until 11pm the night before the New Member Breakfast started at 7:30am.

## **Third Annual Graduate Student Workshop**

**Friday, August 11, 2017 3:00pm**

### **Frontenac**

The History of SSSP and Its Commitment to Social Justice. This year's workshop featured an informal presentation on the impetus of the creation of SSSP, its history and commitment to social justice, and what the organization has personally meant to each of the panelists. Attendees heard from an esteemed panel, including past SSSP President Dr. Marlese Durr, current Vice President Dr. David Embrick, and longstanding member, Dr. Woody Doane. They discussed the sociopolitical situation within academia, other sociological academic conferences, and in larger society which led to the foundation of the Society and which also brought each of them to SSSP. The panelists discussed how their association with SSSP allowed them a safe space surrounded by likeminded colleagues they could learn from and collaborate with. Panelists incorporated their own experiences in academia, and while mentoring, participating in other professional sociological associations, and trying to do social justice work in the community to discuss ways in which their activism had been encouraged by the SSSP community over the years, even while being simultaneously challenged by other colleagues and institutions. Graduate student attendees were encouraged to do work that was important to them and to find a venue to share that work that supported them and their activism.