

Report of the 2016-2017 Local Arrangements Committee (LAC)

Conference Location: Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Conference Site: Montreal Bonaventure Hotel

July 15, 2017

Chair: Jason Carmichael, McGill University

Committee Members: Alissa Mazar, Annie Carrier, Sophie Pomerleau, Naomi Nichols.

Preliminary Meetings:

On October 9th, Michel Smith Koontz and Jason Carmichael met at the Bonaparte restaurant for dinner while Michele was in Montreal for the SSSP Final Site Visit. During our dinner we discussed the upcoming conference in Montreal as well as the expectations and deadlines associated with the Local Area Arrangements Committee. Specifically, Michele and I discussed ideas for local tours of Montreal as well as ways we could encourage local participation in the conference. Michele also outlined the expectations for the Welcome to Montreal piece, the restaurant guide, and the condensed press release. Overall, we had a very fruitful conversation about the upcoming conference and how the city is an ideal site given the theme of this year's meeting.

In January, Jason Carmichael worked closely with Michele and Doni to find the most appropriate tours for conference-goers. This was somewhat more challenging than initially thought. While Montreal has many tours that expose participants to its diverse communities and history of social change, such tours are only held in French. English language tours tend to be rather conventional. That said, we successfully identified several tours we hope are of interest to those attending the conference.

Program/Conference Materials:

Alissa Mazar wrote the graduate student-specific “Welcome to City” guide and Jason Carmichael wrote the primary letter. The guide painted a historical picture of this complex and diverse city paying particular attention to its long history of social action. The letters both included numerous suggestions for activities outside of the meeting with the graduate guide specifically highlighting events and activities that one might want to do on a tighter budget.

Jason Carmichael wrote the main restaurant guide. The extensive guide included numerous places to eat near the conference hotel as well in several noteworthy neighborhoods in Montreal that are easily accessible from the conference location, with those closest to the conference location at the beginning of the guide. Each restaurant included a brief description of the food served, the location and phone number, ratings, a cost guide, a link to online reservations (if applicable), and an indication if the restaurant was vegetarian and/or vegan friendly. My aim was to include a wide range of foods as well as pricing options

Finally, Jason Carmichael wrote the abridged version of “Welcome to Montreal” statement to use for the Press Release.

Meeting Promotion:

To specifically attempt to encourage participation by local academics, the LAC researched a wide range of academics and university departments in Quebec to identify those who might be interested in taking part. A list was submitted to Michele who sent promotional information to all those on the list. Fliers were also placed around the department of sociology at McGill University to encourage participation. Finally, the welcome letters, restaurant guide were all made available on the SSSP website by Bethany Nelson (SSSP GRA).

Action items and suggestions:

Overall, the LAC ran very smoothly due in large part to the professionalism and expertise of Michele Koontz and the guidance and vision on Doni Loseke. Frankly, the only real struggles that existed for us had to do with finding tours that could be given in English.