

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

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July 24, 2017

I. 2017 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 1,018 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 498 (49%) are professionals, 496 (49%) are students/unemployed/emeritus, and 24 (2%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Previous years' attendance (at the time of my report) was 913 in 2016 (Seattle); 916 in 2015 (Chicago); 807 in 2014 (San Francisco); 991 in 2013 (New York City), 698 in 2012 (Denver), and 696 in 2011 (Las Vegas).

We have 179 sessions scheduled with 830 papers, 31 panelists, 5 workshop facilitators, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 177 sessions scheduled with 708 papers, 58 panelists, 3 workshop facilitators, 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, 22 guests had registered. The guests are not included in the total number of registered attendees.

The Association of Black Sociologists will hold their annual meeting from August 10–12 at the hotel. Given the layout of the meeting space, both groups will be located in the same area. While this will allow for ease of communication between the two organizations, it could be challenging to ensure that only SSSP registrants attend our catered receptions. While we encourage our attendees to wear their namebadges, not all do this. I plan to have a SSSP staff member welcoming guests and verifying that they are registered SSSP attendees, as it will be impossible for hotel staff to monitor this on our behalf.

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. We asked the hotel to have the fragrance system turned off (if applicable) and for housekeeping to 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. We received six requests from conference attendees. The requests include the need of accessible hotel accommodations, inform catering of a peanut allergy, access to a lactation room, access to chairs in the meeting space, ability to bring a personal care attendant, and the inability to walk up and down stairs or very long distances.

Since 2010, members and meeting registrants have been able to donate to the Accessibility Services Fund when they register. This year, contributions of \$470 were received (\$310 in 2016; \$270 in 2015; \$275 in 2014; \$566 in 2013; \$225 in 2012; and \$235 in 2011).

A gender-neutral restroom is located near the Verdun Room on the Banquets Level. This facility is available for use by all persons, regardless of their gender identity. The gender-neutral restroom may also function as a family restroom or as a restroom for people with disabilities.

The Comfort Zone is located in the St-Laurent Room on the Banquets Level on Friday and Saturday and in the Net Café on the Banquets Level on 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-one publishing companies were contacted. An additional letter was sent to nine publishing companies participating in the book exhibit. A letter was sent to 142 Ph.D. granting departments and 74 M.A. 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 the University of California Press, Dr. Juan Battle, Russell Sage Foundation, Temple University Press, University of Cincinnati, Mississippi State University, and Indiana University Press. We offer to put an insert in each registrant's conference bag for a fee. Oxford University Press placed an order. In addition, Oxford University Press paid to be a mobile app sponsor. As a result of these efforts, \$3,550 in advertising revenue was generated. Last year, twelve ads were sold and one insert was placed, totaling \$3,950.

IV. ANNUAL MEETING EXEMPTION POLICY

Twenty-four annual meeting exemptions were requested and granted this year (38 in 2016; 22 in 2015; 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 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 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 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 Chair.

V. AUDIO-VISUAL

An LCD projector package will be available for all regular sessions. Roundtable and Critical Dialogue sessions will not have audio-visual equipment; however, in some cases these sessions were placed in meeting rooms designated for regular sessions due to space constraints and will have access to a projector and screen. Presenters 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. During contract negotiations, Héctor and I negotiated complimentary internet access in the meeting space if we signed with the in-house audio-visual company.

After soliciting bids from five audio-visual companies (three companies that SSSP has partnered with in the past: Advanced Solutions, MCRI, and PTA V), Lumens, a California based audio-visual company, and Freeman, the in-house audio-visual company, we signed with Freeman as they submitted the lowest price quote.

The total projected audio-visual charge is \$14,780. In 2016 (Seattle), it cost \$16,833; in 2015 (Chicago), it cost \$11,207; in 2014 (San Francisco), it cost \$16,579; in 2013 (New York City), it cost \$14,111; in 2012 (Denver), it cost \$7,919; and in 2011 (Las Vegas), it cost \$12,631.

VI. AWARDS CEREMONY

The Awards Ceremony will include the presentations of the annual SSSP awards (Arlene Kaplan Daniels Paper Award, Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship, C. Wright Mills Award, Doris Wilkinson Faculty Leadership Award, Joseph B. Gittler Award, Kathleen S. Lowney Mentoring Award, Lee Founders 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 the five books.

Policy Press (publishers of *Agenda for Social Justice: Solutions 2016*) will be exhibiting again this year. Head of Commissioning Victoria Pittman and Nick Lilly from the University of Chicago Press (who market and distribute them in North America) will be available on-site.

VIII. CATERING

During contract negotiations, Héctor and I negotiated 2016 catering menu pricing and a \$11.50 per guest discount from the classic buffet breakfast option that will be served at the New Members Breakfast (value \$1,950). The Society will spend approximately \$35,000 on food and beverage (including 15% service charge, 5% GST Tax, and 9.975% provincial 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-one divisions responded that they would and agreed to contribute \$3,780 toward the cost of the approximately \$11,000 reception. The Drinking and Drugs Division will hold their reception off-site with the ASA Section on Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco.

IX. CHILDCARE MATCHING SERVICE

Nineteen registrants requested participation in the childcare matching service. On June 29, an e-mail was sent to them listing the names, email addresses, and number, gender, and ages of their child(ren). In addition, we provide registrants with the contact information of a local professional childcare provider recommended by the hotel.

One of the registrants responded as follows: "First, it is a very inefficient system. Second, members should have access to professional and affordable childcare at our conference...especially given SSSP's progressive mission. I understand that the rest of our society struggles with the fact that quality and affordable childcare is needed for the full participation of women/mothers to be possible, but this is something that SSSP should understand and act upon."

Héctor contacted the individual and asked for her to be more specific about what else she would like the SSSP to do. Below is her response.

“The ideal solution is to have on-site or nearby, high-quality childcare that is centrally organized by the conference planning committee and in some way partially or fully subsidized by all members/attendees. To clarify, high-quality means that children participate in developmentally appropriate activities led by qualified providers in a collective space and not in a hotel room.

There have been some more recent articles/posts on the need for this type of care at academic conferences and I recommend the following article originally published in Inside Higher Ed, which lays out a solid case for the need and benefits:

http://www.slate.com/articles/life/inside_higher_ed/2015/09/academic_conferences_and_on_site_child_care_an_academic_speaks_out_on_a.html

A quick google search also found that the AAG provides 50% subsidy for such care:

<http://www.aag.org/cs/annualmeeting/childcare>

And I am sure you know that the ASA’s full-day rates are \$55, with offers of need-based scholarships available: <http://www.asanet.org/annual-meeting-2017/child-care-services>

Has SSSP partnered with ASA in the past on childcare?”

Action Item: We would like the Board to discuss this request, so we can follow-up with the registrant.

X. DONATIONS

A special thanks to the University of South Florida Department of Sociology and President Donileen R. Loseke for their financial contributions to program activities and to Oxford University Press for its financial contribution to the conference bags.

XI. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM

Joel Best, Lee Student Support Fund Committee Chair, coordinated the Meeting Mentor Program. Eighty mentees were assigned a meeting mentor. The 2017 Meeting Mentors are: Kathleen A. Asbury, Jessica Penwell Barnett, Alexis A. Bender, Joel Best, Samit Dipon Bordoloi, Jessica Braimoh, Yvonne A. Braun, Sarah Jane Brubaker, Kristen M. Budd, William Cabin, Heather Dalmage, Marjorie DeVault, Patrick Donnelly, Paul Draus, Robert J. Duran, David G. Embrick, Louis Edgar Esparza, Luis A. Fernandez, Giovanna Follo, Jason Ford, San Juanita Garcia, Steve Garner, Honoria Guarino, Sebastián G. Guzmán, Jennifer Haskin, Kasey Henricks, Patricia Snell Herzog, Linda Houser, Matthew W. Hughey, Omari Jackson, Pamela Braboy Jackson, Michelle Renee Jacobs, Phil R. Kavanaugh, E. Brooke Kelly, Edith Kinney, Rebecca J. Kissane, Lloyd Klein, Jackie Krasas, Aukje K. Lamonica, David C. Lane, Valerie Leiter, Annulla Linders, Jessica L. Lucero, Rachel Teresa Macfarlane, Airin Denise Martinez, Laura McKinney, Nancy J. Mezey, Ami R. Moore, Glenn W. Muschert, Dana Y. Nakano, Ethel Nicdao, Naomi Nichols, Kathryn Nowotny, Daniel Olmos, Jennifer M. Randles, Claire M. Renzetti, Mary Romero, Guillermo Rosabal-Coto, Barbara Katz Rothman, Jeffrey O. Sacha, Anna Maria Santiago, Heidi Sarabia, Molly Malany Sayre, Saher Selod, Marc R. Settembrino, Dara Shifrer, Jessica Sperling, Gregory D. Squires, Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl, John Taylor, Bhoomi K. Thakore, Karolyn Tyson, Julia (Jill) Waity, Nicola R. Waters, Barbara Wejnert, Chris Wellin, Elroi J. Windsor, and Jianhua Xu.

XII. MOBILE APP

Thanks to the hard work of IT Specialist Rachel Cogburn, we will have a mobile app for the third year. We signed a one-year contract with Core-Apps. A new contract will need to be signed for future meetings.

XIII. OPTIONAL ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

On Monday, August 14, two workshops will take place at the hotel.

Qualitative Research Practice Workshop

(sponsored by the Department of Sociology, University of South Florida)

9:00am–4:00pm

48 people have registered

Institutional Ethnography Division Workshop

10:00am–4:00pm

47 people have registered

XIV. OPTIONAL TOURS

While Montreal has many tours that expose participants to its diverse communities and history of social change, such tours are only conducted in French. Jason Carmichael, Local Arrangements Committee Chair, identified three popular guided tours (Flavors of The Main Montreal North City Food Tour, Montreal City Guided Sightseeing Tour, and Beyond the Bagel: Montreal Jewish Food Walking Tour) and a self-guided walking tour of the Old Port (historic district).

XV. PROQUEST SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

Over the years, there has been a steady decline in the number of program participants that submit an abstract for publication. In 2016, two abstracts were submitted. I contacted ProQuest last fall and was told they have implemented a new content management system that will not allow them to create abstract records submitted by conference participants. Given the very small number of program participants that took advantage of this service, I don't think its absence will be noticed, but wanted to make you aware.

XVI. 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 Chair Amir B. Marvasti sent two e-mails urging program participants to register. Prior to removing those who didn't register, I sent a personalized e-mail to the paper author(s) and the session organizer. Three program participants were granted an extension and registered. On July 8, a total of 41 program participants were removed for failure to register for the conference despite multiple reminders. A total of 30 program participants were removed from last year's program.

XVII. REGISTRATION BAGS

At the 2016 Annual Meeting, the Board approved that we continue to use conference bags for the 2017 annual meeting, sourcing from a fair trade and/or unionized company. An American Unionized Tote Bag was identified for Montreal. The total price for this year's bag is \$6,310 or \$6.64 each (950 bags) versus \$3,181 or \$3.74 each (850 bags) last year.

The 2016 annual meeting survey included a question regarding members' preferences regarding the future distribution of bags or other souvenirs. With **915 registrants surveyed** and **160 total responses (18% participation rate)**, the responses were as follows:

62% felt registration bags are not necessary. Instead, charge the Administrative Office with the task of providing the Board of Directors with an alternative to the bags that does not exceed the amount we currently spend.

32% felt that we should continue providing the registration bags, with the requirement that they be purchased from a unionized or fair trade supplier. The Society will absorb the additional expense of \$3,000-\$4,000.

6% felt that we should continue our current practice of providing registration bags without requiring that they be produced by unionized or fair trade workers.

Action Item: Given the low survey participation rate, Héctor and I don't feel that we should discontinue bags at this time. We would like to offer conference bags for the 2018 annual meeting, sourcing from a fair trade or unionized company and give registrants the option of declining a bag when registering. By employing this option, we may be able to reduce costs by supplying bags to only those that request one.

XVIII. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE

Eight 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 10-12.

Twenty-two registrants requested the roommate matching service. On June 29, 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.

XIX. MONTREAL BONAVENTURE HOTEL

SSSP received a favorable sleeping room rate of \$189 (CAD) single/double; \$209 (CAD) triple; and \$229 (CAD) quadruple plus tax per night when the hotel contract was signed; or roughly \$151, \$167, and \$183 U.S. dollars, respectively. Our original contracted block total was 725 rooms. We exceeded our room block in May and the hotel was unable to add more rooms, as the hotel was sold out on certain nights during our conference. We explored adding an overflow hotel, but the financial risk to the Society was too high, since the Society must pay for the rooms that are not used by our registrants.

On July 24, our room pickup was 784 rooms. The Society will receive 19 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.

XX. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Isabelle Blais, Convention 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. It was an absolute pleasure working with her. She is a true professional in every sense of the word.

I was very fortunate to work with President Donileen R. Loseke; Program Chair Amir B. Marvasti; Local Arrangements Committee Chair Jason Carmichael; Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado; Information Technology Specialist Rachel Cogburn; Administrative Assistant Marisa Stone; and outgoing Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster Bethany Nelson. I am grateful 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-fifth anniversary with SSSP. I have been privileged to serve the organization under the guidance of many outstanding leaders. It would be my pleasure to continue this service next year in Philadelphia.