

# **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

## **The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)**

**Submitted by Héctor L. Delgado, Ph.D., Executive Officer**

I wish to begin by thanking the Board of Directors and the membership for the honor of serving as the Executive Officer of the SSSP. Next year will be my tenth year as Executive Officer, but it has not felt that way; and it has not, principally because of the people with whom I work. This includes the members of the Board; committee chairs and members; Marisa Stone, Administrative Assistant; Caitlin Mize, Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster; Rachel Cogburn, Information Technology Specialist; and Michele Koontz, Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager. Sadly, Marisa will be leaving us in September or October, so I want to take this opportunity to thank her and to wish her and her family the best in the years ahead. While I am very appreciative of everyone's collegiality and contributions to the Society, I would be remiss not to underscore or highlight Michele Koontz's, whose contributions to the Society for over 25 years are unparalleled. This past year was no different and for that we are most appreciative. To demonstrate this appreciation, we hope to provide her with more support.

### **Proposal for a new full-time administrative position**

Susan Carlson, our incoming treasurer and investment advisor, and I requested the Board's approval to convert the part-time administrative assistant into a full-time Assistant to the Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager position. In our estimation, the amount of work that falls on Michele Koontz's lap is simply too much for us not to help lighten the load. Furthermore, the time will come when Michele will step down as the Society's Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager. When the time comes, we need to have in place someone capable of performing the tasks Michele performs while we conduct a search or, ideally, replacing Michele. The members of the Board of Directors; Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee; and Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee expressed strong support for the proposal immediately. The only issue to discuss is the financial component, which we are committed to do in Philadelphia.

### ***Social Problems***

Our new editors, Annulla (Anna) Linders and Earl Wright II, are now on board and working hard to maintain, if not elevate even higher, *Social Problems* as one of the top social science journals. In fact, we received news recently that the 2017 ISI ranking for *Social Problems* increased, placing it among the top thirty social science journals with an impact factor of 2.071. This ranking reflects, among other things, the quality of the articles and the hard work of our outgoing editor, Pamela Anne Quiroz, and her team. In fact, I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work, including their creative use of social media to promote the journal and to make it even more accessible to a wider audience. Meanwhile, the Administrative Office and I have assured Anna and Earl that we will do what we can to help them in any way that we can, and in this report, I want to reaffirm that commitment.

## **Rapid Response (and letter to the POTUS on child separation at the border)**

This spring the Board approved a mechanism or process that will allow us to respond more quickly to rapidly unfolding events. Normally, we pass resolutions at annual meetings on issues or the Board issues statements on behalf of the membership between annual meetings, but we did not have a way to address issues that required an immediate response. An example of that, and the only time we have employed the new process, was the separation of children, even babies and toddlers, from their parents at the border. We sent a letter to the President of the United States, with copies to the Attorney General and Homeland Security Secretary, condemning the practice of unnecessary family separation and urging them to reunify families as quickly as possible. I invite you to read the letter, which is posted on our website. ([https://www.sssp1.org/file/Announcements/Letter\\_Separating\\_Children\\_6-26-18.pdf](https://www.sssp1.org/file/Announcements/Letter_Separating_Children_6-26-18.pdf)) The new policy reads in part, “[I]n these instances, the current President, Vice-President, and Executive Officer (EO), are authorized by the Board to act on behalf of the Society, as long as the position taken is consistent with the mission of the Society; only after verifiable, credible, and sufficient information has been obtained to support the position; and only on positions for which a substantial consensus in the Society is assumed to exist in support of the position adopted and the manner in which the issue is addressed.” The decision has to be unanimous, i.e., all three parties must agree that the requirements for a quick response have been met. The entire process and rationale can be found in our *Operations Manual*, under “Board of Directors” (I. C. 6. *Statement for Handling Matters Needing an Immediate Response*).

## **Harassment Policy/Statements and Ad Hoc Anti-Harassment Committee**

This past year the Board of Directors approved a *Statement against Discrimination and Harassment* (Operations Manual I.C.3), *Workplace Sexual Harassment Policy* (Operations Manual I.C.4), the insertion of a prominent statement against harassment in the program for the Annual Meeting, and the creation of an ad-hoc committee to consider ways in which we can address issues of harassment, and especially sexual harassment, in the organization, at annual meetings, and in committee deliberations, both face-to-face and online. The statement in the program begins the following way. “As a social justice organization, the SSSP is committed to creating a safe and welcoming space at the annual meeting for the free exchange of ideas and professional development; an environment free from harassment based on, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity or gender expression, national origin, age, disability, health conditions, sexual orientation, religion, language, socioeconomic status, marital status, domestic status, or parental status.” We felt it was important to put front and center the Society’s condemnation of sexual and other forms of harassment at the annual meeting. Meanwhile, we are hopeful that the committee will come up with other recommendations that will provide members and others in the organization and in attendance at meetings with a safe and open space to engage in the kind of interactions required by scholarly and social justice work.

## **Science and Human Rights Coalition of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)**

In 2017 we became members of the AAAS’s Science and Human Rights Coalition. The Coalition is a network of twenty-four member and two affiliated organizations “facilitating communication and partnerships on human rights within and across scientific communities,

and between these and human rights communities.” John Dale (George Mason University) and I serve on the Coalition’s Council, I serve on the Executive Directors’ Circle, and, recently, John was elected to serve on the Coalition’s Steering Committee. The steering committee ensures the implementation of Council decisions, provides guidance to project groups, and serves as the liaison between the AAAS, the Coalition, scientific and engineering associations and human rights communities. John’s election to the steering committee is testimony to our very active participation in the coalition. We just attended a coalition meeting and conference in Washington, D.C. on Human Rights and Higher Education. The conference had excellent speakers on a wide range of issues and we asked for, and shared, with the AAAS and other organizations our statements and policies on harassment and the rapid response process to which I alluded earlier in my report. John, the transnational initiatives committee, and I will be working on developing a page on our website on human rights, which we hope will become a mechanism to share information on human rights with our membership, to help define our role in the Coalition, and to provide interested members with opportunities in and information on human rights work and research.

### **Contract Renewal with Oxford University Press**

The Board voted to continue employing Oxford University Press as the publisher of *Social Problems* through 2024, upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Publisher Search Committee and the Editorial and Publications Committee. Both committees provided OUP with a series of questions and concerns, and these questions and concerns, with OUP’s detailed responses, were provided to the Board to support the recommendations and to help the Board make the final decision. In Philadelphia, the Board will discuss three financial models and decide on one, which will then be incorporated into our new contract with OUP, along with other provisions identified in the exchange that the two committees had with OUP. One model has OUP performing the copy editor and managing editor tasks. The second has both tasks performed in-house by the Society’s editorial team. In a third model, OUP provides the copy editor and the SSSP the managing editor. Financially, the first makes the most sense, but that is not the only consideration. Consequently, the Board chose to table the online conversation until the meeting in Philadelphia in order to have this very important conversation face-to-face. The final contract will be reviewed by a consultant, before sending it to the Board for final review and approval.

### **Acknowledging Traditional Tribal Lands at Annual Meetings**

A member from Canada, Elaine Laberge, raised an important social justice issue with us this summer, which we have decided to address in the welcome by the local arrangements chair. (We will be considering other ways of addressing the issue.) In Canada it is fairly common for organizations and individuals to acknowledge that the city or other location in which a meeting or conference is being held sits on traditional tribal or indigenous land. We believe that this is an appropriate thing to do, since it is important to acknowledge this shameful and tragic chapter in our history, and to call attention to the fact that indigenous people continue to be among the poorest and most vulnerable in the United States. We have revised the local arrangements chair’s contract to request that the chair acknowledge, if it is the case, that the meeting is being held on traditional tribal land, to name them, and to acknowledge and express respect for their history and culture(s). Adriana Leela Bohm, our Philadelphia Local

Arrangements Committee Chair, included this acknowledgement in her welcome statement in the program, writing, "Philadelphia is situated on land that was originally settled by the Lenape almost 10,000 years ago, and we would like to acknowledge this, and express our sincere appreciation and respect for the history and culture of the Lenape people." The following is a link to a guide provided by the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture on how to acknowledge and honor native land at public events and gatherings.

[file:///C:/Users/hdelgado/Downloads/USA%20Honor%20Native%20Land%20Guide%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/hdelgado/Downloads/USA%20Honor%20Native%20Land%20Guide%20(1).pdf).

## **Childcare**

Upon the request of a member, the Board asked Michele and me to investigate whether childcare is something we can and should provide at the annual meeting. The best option, if not the only feasible one, available to us is to hire a professional childcare provider, as the ASA does. In addition to providing the trained personnel and activities for the children, they are insured and their insurance will cover the Society as well. (Despite this coverage, we would likely ask parents or legal guardians to sign a form freeing us of all and any liability.) We would have to provide the meeting space. I contacted ASA's provider, KiddieCorp, and they provided us with a quote for Philadelphia based on twelve children. There is not enough time to set this up for Philadelphia, but the quote gives us something to work with. The quote is based on KiddieCorp providing childcare August 10-12, from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM each day, for a total of 31.5 hours. The staff-to-child ratio would be 1:2 for children 6 months through 11 months old, 1:3 for children 1 through 2 years old; 1:5 for children 3 through 5 years old; and 1:7 for children 6 through 12 years old. The cost to the Society would be \$7,409. If we charge parents a fee, however, the cost to the Society could be considerably lower. For example, if parents are charged \$10 an hour for each child, based on the contracted number of children (12) using the program all day for all three days, the cost to the Society would drop to \$3,629. If we do not charge parents or if we subsidize the cost of their children's care, it raises the question of whether members without children should be asked to pay for or subsidize the care of others' children during a meeting? This is a decision that the Board will have to make. The ASA subsidizes their members' childcare to the tune of \$15,000 or more. The quote we received from KiddieCorp is very detailed and is available to members of the Board of Directors for review. Please keep in mind that the quote we received is for Philadelphia this summer, based on twelve children. If we decide to do this in New York next year the amount is likely to be different, but I assume in the same ballpark for the same number of children and time. In her Meeting Manager report, Michele Koontz provides as well examples of what other organizations do regarding childcare services. Both of our reports are available to members on our website.

## **Retirement from the University of La Verne**

I am seriously considering retiring from the University of La Verne on June 30, 2019. Whether I do or not, I will continue to serve as the Executive Officer for as long as the Board and membership allows me to serve in that capacity or until I decide it is time for me to step down.