

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

Michele Koontz

August 1, 2018

I. 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

I am pleased to report that 905 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 397 (44%) are professionals, 473 (52%) are students/unemployed/emeritus, and 35 (4%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Previous years' attendance (at the time of my report) was 1,018 in 2017 (Montreal), 913 in 2016 (Seattle); 916 in 2015 (Chicago); 807 in 2014 (San Francisco); 991 in 2013 (New York City), and 698 in 2012 (Denver).

We have 155 sessions scheduled with 700 papers, 40 panelists, 9 critics, 3 workshop facilitators, and 1 plenary speaker. Last year, we had 179 sessions scheduled with 830 papers, 31 panelists, 5 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 17 guests registered. Last year at this time, 31 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. 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 invited to request accessibility services to facilitate their full participation in the annual meeting. While two registrants completed the accessibility services section when registering, they did not request any accessibility services. I followed up with one registrant and told her that she could sit with her colleague during conference events. The other registrant checked the box by mistake.

Since 2010, members and meeting registrants have been able to donate to the Accessibility Services Fund when they register. This year, contributions of \$440 were received (\$470 in 2017; \$310 in 2016; \$270 in 2015; \$275 in 2014; \$566 in 2013; and \$225 in 2012). This money is deposited in a separate savings account (available balance: \$6,708).

An all-gender restroom is located near Salon 10 on the Mezzanine Level. This facility is available for use by all persons, regardless of their gender identity. This facility is available because it's important that all members feel safe and included.

For many transgender people and people who don't conform to societal gender norms, using a public restroom is a daily struggle. Trans and gender expansive people are often harassed, physically assaulted, or questioned by authorities in both men's and women's restrooms if they are assumed to be in the wrong restroom.

An all-gender restroom provides access to a safe restroom and changing area for people of any gender identity and presentation. It also provides a safe space for those who need the assistance of a personal care attendant or those with small children.

This year, signage will be posted explaining what an all-gender restroom is. In addition, registration workers will make sure that the signage has not been removed when taking attendance at sessions and meetings.

The Comfort Zone is located in the Franklin Room on the Mezzanine Level. 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.

This year, a lactation room is located in Parlor D on the second floor.

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-two publishing companies were contacted. An additional letter was sent to ten publishing companies participating in the book exhibit. A letter was sent to 146 Ph.D. granting departments and 62 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 American University, Mississippi State University, University of California Press, University of Cincinnati, and University of Minnesota. We offered to put an insert in each registrant's conference bag for a fee. Polity Books Marketing placed an order. In addition, Oxford University Press paid to be a mobile app sponsor. As a result of these efforts, \$2,450 in advertising revenue was generated. Last year, seven ads were sold, one insert was placed, and we had one mobile app sponsor, totaling \$3,550.

IV. ANNUAL MEETING EXEMPTION POLICY

Thirty-five annual meeting exemptions were requested and granted this year (24 in 2017; 38 in 2016; 22 in 2015; 15 in 2014; 39 in 2013; and 29 in 2012).

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 processes 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 or 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

LCD projectors and screens will be available for all traditional 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. For all traditional sessions, presenters and/or session organizers must bring their own laptop (and the connection cord if you have an Apple computer or HDMI connection cord). Powered speakers for audio will not be available for any sessions.

According to my Meeting Manager contract, I am to receive a minimum of three audio-visual bids. This year, I received five bids. The initial quotes ranged from \$11K (PTAV Presentation Services-only included one technician and we require two) to \$43,063 (PSAV Presentation Services, inhouse audio-visual company). While negotiating with the companies, I asked Travis Barone, Sales Manager, PSAV, to quote what it would cost to provide wireless internet in the meeting space, as this was not included in our hotel contract. To our surprise, the cost was \$9,915 less a 30% discount or \$6,940.50. Given that our meeting attendees expect this service, Héctor and I agreed that it must be provided. Travis agreed to waive this fee, if the inhouse av company was selected. After numerous conversations, Travis lowered his bid to \$21,317 (includes two dedicated technicians). This price includes wired internet connections at the registration desk, and power strips and extension packages for all Board of Directors meetings and several committee meetings.

The total projected audio-visual charge is \$16,828. In 2017 (Montreal), it cost \$16,432; 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; and in 2012 (Denver), it cost \$7,919.

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 Fellowship, and the Thomas C. Hood Social Action Award) and the Student Paper Competition winners. Each student paper competition winner, all major award winners and honorable mentions, and all Mills' finalists 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 *Global Agenda for Social Justice 2018*) will be exhibiting again this year. Head of Commissioning Victoria Pittman and Tyler McGaughey from the University of Chicago Press (who market and distribute them in North America) will be available on-site.

Back in January, President Luis A. Fernandez contacted me about having PM Press join our book exhibit. As he put it, "I really love these folks and they connect really well with the theme of the conference." We're excited to have them with us this year.

VIII. CATERING

During contract negotiations, Héctor and I negotiated 2017 catering menu pricing. The Society will spend approximately \$48,000 on food and beverage (including 22% service charge and 8% sales tax). Note: I have applied for sales tax exemption in the state of Pennsylvania and should receive a response in the next few weeks. If approved, we won't be charged sales tax on catering, room charges that appear on the master bill, or on audio-visual equipment rental.

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 \$4,005 toward the cost of the approximately \$12,500 reception. The Drinking and Drugs Division will hold their reception off-site with the ASA Section on Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco.

Based on feedback from previous conference attendees, SSSP will offer complimentary coffee and hot tea in the morning and in the afternoon (new option) as follows:

Thursday: 2:00pm-6:00pm

Friday: 8:00am-10:30am and 2:00pm-4:30pm

Saturday: 7:00am-10:30am and 2:00pm-4:30pm

Sunday: 8:00am-10:30am and 2:00pm-4:30pm

IX. CHILDCARE MATCHING SERVICE

Thirteen 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 provided registrants with contact information of a local professional childcare provider.

The following excerpt appears in the final program: "*The SSSP does not provide childcare services at the annual meeting, but the Administrative Office can provide members, upon request, with a list of other members in need of childcare, in the event that they want to coordinate childcare/outings/etc. with one another. If this does not satisfy their childcare needs, members can call 215-253-4017 to contact Nanny Poppinz, a childcare service in Philadelphia. Please note that the Society has not vetted and therefore is not in the position to recommend this service. Consequently, members are advised to visit the service's website (<http://www.nannypoppinz.com/agency/nanny-childcare-philadelphia-pennsylvania.html>) and to conduct their own vetting.*"

At the 2017 Board of Directors meeting, the Board empowered the Administrative Office to investigate options for childcare at future SSSP annual conferences, and to report back in Philadelphia.

Last fall, I was asked to participate in an ongoing conversation and support network for those leading the charges in their own sociological association/society. I solicited input from those participating in the network in regards to if/how their organization provides childcare, who pays for the service, who identifies the childcare provider, and what liability insurance they have protecting the organization. Below is a summary of those that responded.

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) offers childcare for their Winter Meeting only and they subsidize the entire cost. They use a space in the hotel and contract with a local childcare provider. SWS provides food and games for the children. The childcare service is fully insured and the provider is properly certified. They only offer childcare from 9:00am-5:00pm on Friday and Saturday. They have not had many members use this service in the past. They plan to start requiring a \$50 deposit that will be refunded after the meeting. Per Barret Katuna, SWS Executive Officer, "providing childcare doesn't cost SWS a whole lot of money because we will probably just need one childcare provider. When all is said and done, it probably won't cost us more than \$500 for the Denver Meeting."

The North Central Sociological Association (NCSA) does not currently provide childcare for their attendees.

The Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) offers a list of local childcare options (if requested) and they offer to subsidize childcare. They don't currently have an amount identified for this (still in discussion), as they want to be specific regarding when they'll subsidize childcare (i.e. not during times where there is no MSS-sponsored event). They do require that childcare requests be made by March 1, in order to be eligible for funds. They haven't had requests for funding in years.

The Southern Sociological Society (SSS) has offered childcare at three annual meetings and only one year was successful (2016 in Atlanta). In year two, not enough people signed up to justify asking parents/legal guardians to pay. In year three, 16 children were signed up, but only 2 came. As a result, parents/legal guardians were not asked to pay their portion and SSS subsidized the entire cost. They require a \$40 non-refundable deposit and parents or legal guardians pay an hourly rate of \$10 per child. Parents or legal guardians must bring food and games for their child(ren). SSS has signed a contract with Nanny Poppinz for their 2016-2018 annual meetings. They work with a company that does the vetting for nannies in host cities. All childcare providers must be licensed, bonded, and insured. SSS has a \$2,350 childcare budget (\$1,500 for nannies, \$750 hospitality suite, \$100 food for nannies).

X. DONATIONS

A special thanks to Northern Arizona University, Office of the Provost, Department of Sociology and Social Work, and the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice for their financial contributions to program activities and to Oxford University Press for its financial contribution to the conference bags.

XI. MEETING MENTOR PROGRAM

Meghan G. McDowell, Lee Student Support Fund Committee Chair, coordinated the Meeting Mentor Program. Sixty mentees were assigned a meeting mentor. The 2018 Meeting Mentors are: Kathleen A. Asbury, Jessica Penwell Barnett, Hara Bastas, Alexis A. Bender, Joel Best, Zachary W. Brewster, Jacqueline Brooks, Sarah Jane Brubaker, William D. Cabin, Clare Cannon, Deirdre D. Caputo-Levine, Katherine A. Durante, David G. Embrick, Elizabeth B. Erbaugh, Louis Edgar Esparza, Luis A. Fernandez, George Gonos, Dana Greene, Sebastián G. Guzmán, Jo Mhairi Hale, Ferzana D. Havewala, Kasey Henricks, Matthew W. Hughey, Omari Jackson, Shirley A. Jackson, Amanda Jungels, Lloyd Klein, Aukje K. Lamonica, David C. Lane, Eric D. Larson, Valerie Leiter, Donileen R. Loseke, Michelle A. Meyer,

Nancy J. Mezey, Brian Monahan, Shahida Murtaza, Glenn W. Muschert, Naomi Nichols, Kathryn Nowotny, Amaka Camille Okechukwu, Jennifer M. Randles, Claire M. Renzetti, Barbara Katz Rothman, Saher Selod, Julie Setele, Hephzibah V. Strmic-Pawl, Bhoomi K. Thakore, Chris Wellin, Elroi J. Windsor, and Bradley J. Zopf.

XII. MOBILE APP

Thanks to the hard work of IT Specialist Rachel Cogburn, we have a mobile app for the fourth year. Earlier this year, we signed a two-year contract with Core-Apps.

As of July 30, there are 264 users of the mobile app (29% of registrants). This includes anyone who has downloaded the app and viewed/used the app on a computer, iPad, or similar device without actually downloading (or installing) the app. Of the 264 users, 101 are on an IOS system (iPhone, iPad, iPod) and 21 are on an Android device. 142 users are viewing the app on the web. Of the 264 users of the app, 141 (15% of registrants) have installed the app on their device.

XIII. OPTIONAL ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

On Monday, August 13, two workshops will take place at the hotel and both workshops are sold-out.

Community-Based Participatory Action Research Workshop

(sponsored by the Community Research and Development Division)

9:00am–4:30pm

50 SSSP members registered (\$25 each)

Writing and Publishing Workshop

(sponsored by the Social Problems Theory Division)

10:00am–3:30pm

52 SSSP members registered (at no charge)

XIV. OPTIONAL WALKING TOURS

SSSP is offering two walking tours with Bob Skiba of the Association of Philadelphia Tour Guides. Tour tickets cost \$15 each and both tours are sold-out.

Ghetto to Gayborhood Walking Tour

Saturday, August 11, 10:00am–12:00pm

20 tickets sold

Raising a Glass to Prohibition Walking Tour

Sunday, August 12, 10:00am–12:00pm

20 tickets sold

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 Chair A. Javier Treviño 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. Two program participants were granted an extension and registered. One program participant

was granted an extension to register onsite. On July 6, a total of 45 program participants were removed for failure to register for the conference despite multiple reminders. A total of 41 program participants were removed from last year's program.

XVI. REGISTRATION BAGS AND PRINTED PROGRAMS

Last year, the Board of Directors approved that registration bags and printed programs would only go to those who requested them on their registration form. In order to cut costs and reduce environmental impact, registrants were encouraged to forego a bag and program.

Of the 905 registrants, 407 (45%) requested a registration bag and 438 (48%) requested a printed program. Given that this is the first year that registrants were given a choice and the default choice was "No," 550 bags (60%) were ordered and 550 (60%) programs were printed.

At the 2016 Annual Meeting, the Board approved that we continue to use registration bags, sourced from a fair trade and/or unionized company. An American Unionized Tote Bag was identified. The total price for this year's bag is \$3,960 or \$7.20 each (550 bags) versus \$6,310 or \$6.64 each (950 bags) last year.

XVII. REGISTRATION WORKERS AND ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE

Six graduate student members will work at the registration desk. In exchange for working 12 hours, five will receive a complimentary shared hotel room for the nights of August 9-11. The other graduate student lives nearby and will be paid \$15 per hour.

Thirty 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.

XVIII. SHERATON PHILADELPHIA DOWNTOWN HOTEL ROOM RATES

In early January, Héctor and I discovered that a lower room rate was being offered online. After several conversations with Stefanie Mattera, Associate Director of Sales, our conference rates went from \$187 single/double; \$207 triple; and \$227 quad to \$175 single/double; \$195 triple; and \$215 quad. In addition, the hotel extended our cut-off date to 8/6/18. The hotel offered the lower rate in an effort to show us how much they value our business and to try to honor the rate integrity of the group. Unfortunately, a lower rate was offered online by the hotel a week or so ago. Once I alerted Brittany Caserta, Director of Convention Services, it was removed quickly.

For many years, we have been exceeding our room block prior to the cut-off date and some registrants could not get a room at our hotel. Starting with the 2018 hotel contract, we increased our contracted block total to 840 rooms.

On July 27, our room pickup was 780 rooms (93% pickup). The Society will receive 18 complimentary room nights. As long as we exceed 70% of our 840-room block (588 rooms), the Society will not be charged meeting room rental.

XIX. SHERATON PHILADELPHIA DOWNTOWN HOTEL/PHILADELPHIA 201 HOTEL

Last week, we were notified that as of August 1, 2018, the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel will be known as the Philadelphia 201 Hotel and will no longer be a Sheraton branded hotel. This change marks the start of a yearlong, multi-million dollar, complete property renovation and revitalization.

For Starwood Preferred & Marriott Rewards Guest members, nothing will change. Guest will continue to be awarded membership points and earn elite night credits for their stay. The hotel sales team has assured us that our group can expect exceptional service from their hotel team. They will host a welcome break in

the lobby on Thursday, August 9 from 1:00pm-6:00pm for those checking in.

In the fall of 2019, the hotel will be positioned to offer a new experience and will relaunch once again as the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel.

XX. MEETING MANAGER'S COMMENTS

I worked closely with Stefanie Mattera, Associate Director of Sales; Brittany Caserta, Director of Convention Services; and Chelsea Cioppi, Group Rooms Coordinator. I provided Brittany with our details for VIP amenities, audio-visual requirements, catering for all food functions, meeting room set up, and signage. I provided Chelsea with our VIP and staff sleeping room needs and worked with her when reservations needed to be amended or cancelled. It was a pleasure to work with them.

I was very fortunate to work with President Luis A. Fernandez; Program Chair A. Javier Treviño; Local Arrangements Committee Chair Adriana Leela Bohm; Executive Officer Héctor L. Delgado; Information Technology Specialist Rachel Cogburn; Administrative Assistant Marisa Stone; and Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster Caitlin Mize. I am grateful for their invaluable contributions to the program. I can't say enough about their hard work and dedication to the Society. I will miss working with Marisa when she resigns from her position, effective October 15.

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-sixth anniversary with SSSP. I have been privileged to serve the organization under the guidance of many outstanding leaders.