

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Editorial & Publications Committee Report

Louis Edgar Esparza, Chair, 2021-2022

August 1, 2022

The annual meeting of the Editorial & Publications (E&P) Committee was called to order at 11:00 EST on July 28, 2022.

Attendees:

Yvonne Braun; Kristen Budd (Chair-Elect, Justice 21 Committee); Paul Joosse; Sarah Levine (Oxford UP); Annulla Linders (Co-Editor, *Social Problems*); Glenn Muschert (Chair, Justice 21 Committee); Victoria Pittman (Bristol UP); Claire Renzetti; Tracy L. Vargas; Mi'Chael Wright (Chair, *Social Problems* Social Media Committee); Earl Wright II (Co-Editor, *Social Problems*).

New members are Alexis Bender and Luis Fernandez. Outgoing members are Louis Edgar Esparza; Paul Joosse; and Sanjay Tewari.

Summary of 2021-2022 E&P Committee Activities

During 2021-2022, the Committee was engaged in the following activities:

1. The Committee reviewed the 2022 OUP Marketing Plan for *Social Problems*.
2. The Committee Chair discussed changes to the contract with Bristol UP, the Chair of the Justice 21 Committee, and the Executive Office.
4. The Committee approved an advertisement for a new editorial team for *Social Problems*.
5. The Committee reviewed the annual self-evaluation of the editors of *Social Problems*.

Report from A. Linders, E. Wright II, and D. Brooms, Co-Editors, *Social Problems*

The E&P Committee had previously received the *Social Problems* Annual Report and Annulla gave highlights at the meeting. The ranking of the journal relative to other journals rose from #31 in 2020 to #10 in 2021. The Committee expressed appreciation for the editors' hard and diligent work and that of their Editorial Team. The journals' 2021 Impact Factor was 5.397, up from 3.115 in 2020 and 2.345 in 2019. The way that Clarivate calculates Impact Factor now includes metrics for Advance Articles. This change raised the Impact Factor for several journals across the discipline. The editorial team expects this metric to fall across sociology journals next year. Nonetheless, the journal's ranking relative to other journals rose amidst this change.

The editorial team's second term welcomes Co-Editor, Derrick Brooms. It is unusual for an editorial team to have a second term and this will be their final term. The goals and

ambitions for the journal remain the same: to create a space for exciting sociology. They expressed gratitude for the support they receive from the Society and OUP.

Total submission fell, but the time-to-decision for article submissions has been shortened. The full consequences of the pandemic on metrics are still being processed. Most submissions come from the United States. The journal published a special issue on the Sociology of W.E.B. DuBois and plans to publish two additional special issues.

The journal is now able to support two GAs. This may be an important factor in recruiting a new editorial team, since university administrators are increasingly less willing to support journals. Course releases will still be important for universities to support. Finding reviewers is increasingly a problem as academics are wanting to be compensated for their work.

Report from Sarah Levine of Oxford University Press

The Committee had previously received the *Social Problems* Publisher's Report from Oxford University Press. Online user engagement rose from pandemic lows, but is still below pre-pandemic levels. Sarah would like to see more international user engagement. Current authorship and Advisory Board members currently represent academics largely from the US. Half of the traffic to OUP comes from mobile devices.

Sarah explained the change to the calculation in Impact Factor and its impact. Specifically, Impact Factor now includes Advance Articles in the calculation, increasing the number of citable items by which citations are divided. This means that next year's Impact Factor for the journal (and most other journals) will likely decline. This fluctuation in the Impact Factor should likely even out by the 2024 Impact Report. *Social Problems* authorship is 90% North American, with competitors featuring a 75-80% rate. It is harder to secure reviewers for articles on international topics.

Revenues have been in a 2.83% YOY decline since the start of the contract with OUP.

This amounts to a 20% decline in revenues over this seven-year period, not accounting for inflation. Taking inflation into account, this represents a decline in revenue of more than 35% over the seven-year period. Libraries continue to subscribe to the journal through collections rather than an individual subscription to the journal at an increasing rate. This has led to a steady decline in revenues, as OUP continues to market lower-cost collections to librarians. The committee thanked Sarah for her report.

Report from Mi'Chael Wright, Chair of the Social Media Committee

The Committee had previously received the Committee on Social Media Annual Report. The Social Media Committee is a team of six individuals that meet monthly to discuss ways to increase online engagement with journal content. The committee produced original content, including tweets, Facebook posts, and Authors' Attic YouTube videos. There is a large overlap between Facebook and Twitter followers of *Social Problems* accounts. Much of the growth in followers is taking place on Twitter. Engagement is also higher on Twitter. *Social Problems* has more than 30% more

Twitter followers than peer journals such as *ASR* and *Social Forces*. Mi'Chael encourages SSSP leadership to join Twitter to drive further engagement. Twitter engagement with journal content also helps to raise Altmetric scores. If an author is mentioned in the news and this is communicated to the social media committee, they would be thrilled to drive further attention to it. The Committee thanked Mi'Chael Wright for her service as Chair of the Social Media Committee.

Report from Victoria Pittman, Bristol University Press

Bristol UP sees a strong synergy with the goals of SSSP and hopes to have a more global readership, which could be an area of focus and growth in the future. The press is moving away from the publishing of physical books and toward the publishing of ebooks. The press may explore tracking citations and impact with Altmetrics to drive content engagement. The Bristol UP blog publishes excerpts from their offerings as well as other content. Authors with the press are encouraged to write for the blog. The *Agenda* was formerly published as an open access book, but is now offered *gratis* only to SSSP members. The open access books are most commonly accessed from Canada, the US, UK, India, Kenya, and the Philippines.

Report from Glenn Muschert, Editor, *Agenda for Social Justice*

The Justice 21 Committee publishes the *Agenda for Social Justice* on a bi-annual basis as well as rapid response volumes on an as-needed basis. The committee published such a volume within twelve-weeks on the topic of COVID-19.

The Justice 21 Committee has been ad-hoc for twenty years and will now be a permanent sub-committee of the Editorial and Publications Committee. Glenn has been involved for most of this period and will be stepping back in the coming years. Kristen Budd is the incoming chair of the Justice 21 Committee. E&P is now responsible for appointing Justice 21 Committee members and the Justice 21 Committee is free to offer recommendations. Justice 21 Committee members serve two-year terms. The Chair of the Justice 21 Committee will hold an ex officio non-voting position on E&P. The Justice 21 Committee decides on its own Chair.

The Justice 21 Committee requested support for social media engagement. Future issues of the *Agenda* may be thematic, with committee members organizing proposals. A new volume of the *Agenda* is scheduled for publication in 2024, corresponding with the Philadelphia meeting.

New Business

1. The Committee unanimously (3-0-0) approved a Motion addressed to the Board of Directors to request that Division Chairs include links to *Social Problems* and the *Agenda* on their websites.
2. The Committee discussed selection of the new Chair of the E&P Committee for 2022-2023. Claire Renzetti nominated Yvonne Braun and the nomination was accepted. The Committee unanimously (3-0-0) elected Yvonne Braun as the next E&P Chair.

The meeting was adjourned as 13:02 EST.

Attachments

1. MOTION to request that Division Chairs include links to *Social Problems* and the *Agenda* on their websites.
2. Advertisement for *Social Problems* Editor Search.