

# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEETING MANAGER

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## I. 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

In an ongoing effort to increase attendance by keeping registration rates low, the Board of Directors (Board) approved the following registration rates:

- **Early bird registration:** \$165 for members and \$50 for students/underemployed/emeritus members (valid until June 1)
- **Pre-registration:** \$175 for members and \$60 for student/underemployed/emeritus members (valid June 2-July 26)
- **On-site registration:** \$200 for members and \$70 for students/underemployed/emeritus members (valid August 17-20)

I am pleased to report that 579 attendees have registered for the annual meeting. Of those registered, 316 (55%) are professionals, 246 (42%) are students/unemployed/emeritus, and 17 (3%) are exempt from paying meeting registration. Previous years' attendance (at the time of my report) was 480 in 2022 (Los Angeles), 769 in 2021 (fully virtual meeting), 120 in 2020 (1/2-day complimentary virtual meeting), 995 in 2019 (New York City), 905 in 2018 (Philadelphia), and 1,018 in 2017 (Montréal).

We have 114 sessions scheduled with 426 papers, 15 panels with 69 panelists, 10 critics, and 1 plenary speaker. In 2022, we had 99 sessions scheduled with 361 papers, 7 panels with 31 panelists, 9 critics, and 1 plenary speaker.

## II. 2023 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Compared to one year ago, total membership (including last year's members who have not yet renewed) is down 14% (271 members) and current membership (2023+: 1,079) is down 10% (123 members). Members continue to renew at a lower rate. It should be noted that the \$275 dues category (gross annual income of \$100K and up) is the only membership category that continues to renew at the same level as seen in 2022 (2023: 133 members vs. 2022: 132 members).

<u>7/14/23</u>	<u>7/16/22</u>	<u>7/19/21</u>	<u>7/17/20</u>	<u>7/19/19</u>
2023+: 1,079	2022+: 1,202	2021+: 1,467	2020+: 1,099	2019+: 1576
2022: 599	2021: 747	2020: 412	2019: 916	2018: 711
<b>Total: 1,678</b>	<b>Total: 1,949</b>	<b>Total: 1,879</b>	<b>Total: 2,015</b>	<b>Total: 2,287</b>

## III. ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

SSSP is committed to making our annual meeting accessible to all. Written guidelines were posted on our website and distributed to all program participants to urge and assist them to be increasingly creative and conscientious in their inclusiveness. The guidelines emphasized accessible presentations, visual materials, air quality and service animals, area of rescue assistance, accessible seating, sign and voice interpreting, audio equipment, and discussions.

The Board voted to offer the opportunity for remote presentation, with paid registration, for people who have a disability and people who have a medical condition for which a medical professional would advise against in-person attendance. Two program participants will be participating remotely.

Attendees were invited to request accessibility services to facilitate their full participation in the annual meeting. Two registrants completed the accessibility services section when they registered. One requested a printed program schedule and the second request was more of a consideration for future meetings (regarding remote presentations). This information was shared with Dr. Marlese Durr, Accessibility Committee Chair, so she could follow-up with them.

### **Area of Rescue Assistance**

An Area of Rescue Assistance has been established and will be clearly marked with signage on the Mezzanine Level. In the event of a hotel evacuation during meeting hours, hotel staff will check this area for attendees who require assistance.

### **Comfort Zone**

The Comfort Zone will be located in Salon 7 on the Mezzanine Level. This space provides 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. Attendees are encouraged to silence their devices and refrain from talking on cell phones in this area. This space should not be used for committee meetings.

### **All Gender Restroom**

An All Gender Restroom will be located on the Mezzanine Level. This restroom facility will be available for use by all persons, regardless of their gender identity. The All Gender Restroom will be marked with door signage. Please help make this facility and the meeting an inclusive space for transgender and gender non-conforming attendees by respecting the right of everyone to use them.

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.

### **Lactation Room**

The Lactation Room will be located in Salon 1 on the Mezzanine Level. This quiet space is designated for use by conference attendees requiring a private space for nursing needs. Attendees are encouraged to silence their devices and refrain from talking on cell phones in this area. This space should not be used for committee meetings.

## **IV. ANNUAL MEETING EXEMPTION POLICY**

Seventeen annual meeting exemptions were requested and granted this year (11 in 2022, 27 in 2021, 0 in 2020, 23 in 2019, 35 in 2018, and 24 in 2017).

### **Current Exemption Policy**

All session participants (except for those listed under “b” below) must be current members (they may join on acceptance of their presentation) of the Society and must register for the annual meeting by June 1. Persons failing to register by June 1 will have their presentations deleted from the program.

The Administrative Office processes all qualified exemption requests for conference registration in the order received. In addition, the Program Chair notifies the Administrative Officer when they approve 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.
- 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 residing in economically disadvantaged countries who without these funds would be unable to attend the meeting.
- 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 in an effort to maximize space. For all traditional sessions, presenters

and/or session organizers must bring their own laptop (and the connection cord if they have an Apple computer or HDMI connection cord). Powered speakers for audio will not be available for any sessions, as such, we discourage the inclusion of short video clips in presentations due to accessibility purposes (it will be difficult for the audience to hear them). Internet access, courtesy of SSSP, will be available in all meeting spaces.

According to my Meeting Manager contract, I am to secure a minimum of three audio-visual bids. This year, I requested a bid from six companies and received two bids. Three companies were unable to bid because they were already booked and one company did not respond.

Given that complimentary internet access in the meeting space was not provided by the hotel, SSSP had to purchase it. Encore, the in-house audio-visual provider, submitted an “internet only” quote for \$8,505. If SSSP selected Encore as their sole audio-visual provider, we would not be charged for internet in the meeting space. After negotiations, the total projected audio-visual charge will be approximately \$30,000.

In 2022 (Los Angeles), it cost \$34,543; in 2019 (New York City), it cost \$31,518; in 2018 (Philadelphia), it cost \$20,181; and in 2017 (Montréal), it cost \$16,432.

## **VI. AWARDS CEREMONY**

The Awards Ceremony will include the presentations of the Arlene Kaplan Daniels Paper Award, Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship, C. Wright Mills Award, Doris Wilkinson Faculty Leadership Award, Indigenous Peoples’ Social Justice Award, Joseph B. Gittler Award, Kathleen S. Lowney Mentoring Award, Lee Founders Award, Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Fellowship, Social Entrepreneurship Paper Awards, 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 were mailed a plaque earlier this month. These individuals will be acknowledged in a slideshow presentation at the ceremony and on our website. In addition, an abstract of each student’s winning paper will be posted on our website along with their contact information.

Each student paper winner received complimentary student membership and meeting registration (courtesy of SSSP) and a monetary stipend (courtesy of their division). It is the Division Chair’s responsibility to recognize their winners, honorable mentions, and outstanding scholarship award winners at their divisional business meeting, in their division newsletter, and on their division’s social media accounts. Division Chairs are responsible for obtaining plaques for their honorable mentions or outstanding scholarship award winners, if desired.

## **VII. BOOK EXHIBIT**

The Scholar’s Choice will again be organizing and managing our book exhibit 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.

Bristol University Press, and its imprint Policy Press, publisher of the upcoming *The Sentencing Project: Social Problems in the Age of Mass Incarceration* will be exhibiting again this year. All Sociology books will be offered at a 50% discount for the duration of the annual meeting.

PM Press will be exhibiting again this year. They amplify the voices of radical authors, artists, and activists. Their aim is to deliver bold political ideas and vital stories to all walks of life and arm the dreamers to demand the impossible.

## **VIII. CATERING**

When negotiating the hotel contract, Héctor and I were able to secure a 20% discount on food and beverage menu pricing and a 35% discount on brewed coffee (regular and decaffeinated) and herbal tea by the gallon. The food and beverage minimum is \$38,000 plus a 22% taxable service charge and 8% sales tax (total \$50,069).

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 23 Divisions to co-sponsor a joint reception instead of hosting their own. Twenty divisions responded that they would contribute \$3,350 toward the cost of the Division-Sponsored Reception. The Drinking and Drugs Division will hold their reception off-site in collaboration with the Drugs and Society Section of ASA.

SSSP will offer complimentary hot/cold beverages and snacks in the morning (whole fruit, granola bars, individual yogurts) and afternoon (whole fruit, granola bars, individual bags of pretzels or chips) as follows:

- Thursday: 2:00pm-6:00pm
- Friday: 8:00am-10:00am and 2:00pm-4:00pm
- Saturday: 7:00am-9:00am and 2:00pm-4:00pm
- Sunday: 8:00am-10:00am and 2:00pm-4:00pm

In addition, SSSP will subsidize the cost of wine, beer, and non-alcoholic beverages at the Arrival Meet & Greet Reception and the Welcoming Reception. Attendees will pay a reduced amount. Complimentary wine, beer, and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided at the Division-Sponsored Reception.

#### **IX. CHILDCARE MATCHING SERVICE**

Five registrants requested participation in the childcare matching service. On July 3, an e-mail was sent to them listing the names, e-mail addresses, and number, identified gender, and ages of the child(ren) of the other registrants requesting participation in the service. In addition, we provided registrants with contact information of a local professional childcare provider.

#### **X. COVID-19 RELATED POLICY**

SSSP is taking many steps to ensure the health and well-being of meeting attendees and their guests. All attendees will be required to follow any COVID 19-related protocols mandated by local authorities at the time of the meeting. SSSP strongly recommends that attendees receive COVID-19 vaccination in advance of participation and use masks while we are together. As you navigate the meeting space, please do your best to help protect all of our colleagues.

#### **XI. HOTEL ROOM RATES**

SSSP received a favorable sleeping room rate of \$191 single/double and \$211 triple/quad plus tax per night when the hotel contract was signed in December 2019. As a result of the pandemic, we were able to reduce our room block from 875 rooms to 700 rooms. In addition, we were able to modify our guestroom performance clause, thus making the Society's room commitment 560 rooms.

As of July 11, our room pickup was 608 rooms (87% pickup of revised contracted block total). The Society will receive 15 complimentary room nights. As long as we exceed 80% of our 700-room block (560 rooms) and reach our food and beverage minimum, the Society will not be charged meeting room rental.

#### **XII. MOBILE APP**

Based on the Board's decision to no longer print programs, it is essential to provide a mobile app that is easy to use. Given our positive experience with Core-Apps in the past, we contracted with them for our mobile app needs. IT Specialist Rachel Cogburn has worked tirelessly to customize the mobile app to assure its ease of use.

#### **XIII. OPTIONAL ONE-DAY WORKSHOP**

On Monday, August 21, four workshops will take place.

##### **Community-Based Participatory Action Research Workshop**

(Sponsored by the Community Research and Development Division)

8:45am-4:30pm

8 registrants paid \$75 and 6 registrants paid \$25 (Total 14 registrants paid: \$750)

### **Institutional Ethnography Workshop**

(Sponsored by the Institutional Ethnography Division)

9:30am–3:30pm

3 registrants paid \$75 and 11 registrants paid \$50 (Total 14 registrants paid: \$775)

### **Professional Development for Early Career Scholars Workshop**

(Sponsored by the Environment and Technology Division)

9:00am–12:00pm

1 registrant paid \$30 and 7 registrants paid \$20 (Total 8 registrants paid: \$170)

### **Purposive Community-Engaged Research Workshop**

(Sponsored by the Program Committee)

9:00am–5:00pm

3 registrants paid \$50 and 7 registrants paid \$25 (Total 10 registrants paid: \$325)

## **XIV. OPTIONAL WALKING TOURS**

SSSP is offering two walking tours. Both tours are wheelchair accessible. Tour tickets cost \$20 each.

### **Badass Women's History Tour of Philadelphia**

Saturday, August 19, 9:30am–12:30pm

Limit 40 people; 21 tickets sold

### **Philly Gayborhood Tour: Telling LGBTQ Stories with Pride**

Sunday, August 20, 11:30am–2:00pm

Limit 40 people; 9 tickets sold

## **XV. REGISTRATION REMINDERS**

The Board approved a policy that program participants will be dropped from the Annual Meeting program if they do not register by June 1. The Board also requested 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 twice asked session organizers to contact their participants who had not registered and urge them to register. In addition, Program Chair Mary Romero sent an e-mail urging program participants to register.

On July 10, the Administrative Office sent a final (personalized) e-mail to the paper author(s) and the session organizer(s) instructing them that they would be removed from the program for failure to register if they didn't respond by July 15. As of today, a total of 26 program participants will be removed if they don't register.

## **XVI. REGISTRATION WORKERS**

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 17-19. The other student lives nearby and will be paid \$18 per hour.

## **XVII. ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE**

Seventeen registrants requested the roommate matching service. On July 3, 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. SPONSORS**

A special thanks to our sponsors for their contributions to program activities: Bristol University Press | Home of Policy Press, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Oxford University Press, and the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau.

## **XIX. CLOSING COMMENTS**

I worked with Stefanie Mattera, Director of Sales & Marketing, to negotiate and amend our hotel contract (reduce our room block and modify our guestroom performance clause). Ms. Mattera was extremely professional and very appreciative that the Society is returning to the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown Hotel.

I provided Anthony Venice, Housing Coordinator, with our VIP and staff sleeping room needs and worked with him when reservations needed to be amended or cancelled. Mr. Venice was extremely responsive and a true professional.

I will be providing Miwa Hirata, Catering Convention Services Manager, with our details for VIP amenities, audio-visual requirements, catering for all food functions, meeting room set up, and signage. Ms. Hirata was very knowledgeable and shared creative tips regarding menu selection and meeting room/reception set ups.

I was very fortunate to work with President Shirley A. Jackson; Program Chair Mary Romero; Local Arrangements Chair Adriana Leela Bohm; Interim Executive Officer Susan M. Carlson and our new Executive Officer Elroi J. Windsor; Assistant to the Administrative Officer Kelsey Whitaker; Information Technology Specialist Rachel Cogburn; and outgoing Graduate Research Associate and Webmaster Jeremy Booth. I am grateful for their invaluable contributions. I can't say enough about their hard work and dedication to the Society.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the Board, for giving me another opportunity to serve as Meeting Manager. It has been a privilege to work alongside you this year. I welcome the opportunity to continue this service next year in Montréal.