

SSSP Membership Committee Report
Submitted to the Board of Directors
Annual Meeting – San Francisco, CA – August, 2004
by
Karl Bryant and Nelta Edwards, Co-Chairs

A. Membership as of July, 2004

As of June 2004 SSSP membership is up by approximately 9 percent, or 130 members, over this time last year (n=1548 compared to 1418). The largest single category membership continues to be among our student members (n=488), followed by those in the \$135 membership category (n=177) and those in the \$105 membership category (n=105). This represents a 20% growth in the student membership category and a 5% and 9% growth in the \$135 and the \$105 membership categories respectively. Encouragingly, the membership category with the largest growth is the \$35, first year professor membership category, with an 80% increase (from 40 to 72 members).

The top three divisions in terms of membership are:

1. Poverty, Class and Inequality (n=566)
2. Racial and Ethnic Minorities (n=426)
3. Conflict, Social Action, and Change (n=378)

These are followed closely by Social Problems Theory (n=360), and Crime and Juvenile Delinquency (n=355).

B. 2004 Life Memberships

At this report date, we have 24 Life Members, up by one member over last year.

C. Committee focus for 2003 - 2004

The committee focused on three projects this year:

1. **Making personal contact with non-renewing members.** During the 2003 membership committee meeting in Atlanta it was noted that the loss of members in the upper dues paying categories hurt the Society's financial position considerably. To remedy this, committee members split up the list of non-renewers (from 2002 to 2003) at the \$105, \$120 and the \$135 levels and attempted to contact them personally via phone and/or email to encourage them to renew. While well intentioned, this effort netted very little in the way of renewals and the committee recommends that this method of seeking renewals not be undertaken in the future as, noted above, it nets very little and is time consuming and discouraging for membership committee members.

2. **Redesigning SSSP brochure.** The brochure pictures were replaced to present the activist oriented roots of the Society. Additional changes were made to the text of the brochure to make it more concise.

3. **Targeted recruitment drive.** At the request of the long range planning committee, the membership committee conducted a recruitment drive. Current SSSP members were sent a brochure and letter encouraging them to ask a

friend/colleague to join SSSP or suggesting that they pay for a graduate student membership. Additionally, based on results of earlier campaigns, Tom Hood and Michele Koontz recommended targeting members of the American Society of Criminology (3365 brochures mailed) and members of the following ASA sections:

Medical Sociology: 1,180 members
Crime, Law and Deviance: 790 members
Family: 900 members
Sociology of Sex and Gender: 1,320 members
Collective Behavior/Social Movements: 760 members
Racial and Ethnic Minorities: 855 members
(3563 brochures mailed)

Kathleen Ferraro recommended that Law and Society Association (1158 brochures mailed) members be recruited as well.

Overall, this campaign netted 109 members. By far the most successful targeting was to Law and Society members of whom nearly 4% (n= 46) of those contacted joined SSSP.

Co-chairs would like to express their appreciation for the work of all of the committee members and especially to Michele Koontz for her expertise and support throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Karl Bryant and Nelta Edwards