

Memorandum

To: SSSP Board of Directors

From: Kimberly J. Cook, Chair: *Ad hoc* Committee on Long Range Planning.

Committee members: Karl Bryant, Kathleen Ferraro, Susan Carlson, Donald Cunnigen, Nelta Edwards, Martha Hargraves, Bob Perrucci, Claire Renzetti, Aimee Van Wagenen, and Luis Fernandez

Report from the Committee

August 11, 2005

Background

Two years ago, this *ad hoc* committee was established and charged with considering “the issues of revenue development, meeting form and structure of the SSSP Organization, and how we can provide services to members and to the public in the 21st Century.” At the 2004 Board meeting, we reported on our meeting and made a list of recommendations to the Board. We also requested re-authorization for another year of work, and requested that two student members be added to the committee. This committee met on August 10, 2005 to continue our work.

Recommendations from last year’s report to the Board are updated.

1. We recommended more workshop-style sessions on the program geared towards early career scholar/activists. The 2005 program includes many workshop-style sessions on a variety of issues many early career scholar/activists face. **We urge the 2006 (and future years’) Program Committee to systematically create more workshop events like this.**

2. We recommended enhancing the website; this has been done.

3. We recommended that new ph.d.’s be provided with free membership in the Society for their first year after completing the degree. This proved to be logistically difficult to implement and we discussed the value of working on this against the labor costs involved in making it happen. Therefore, we recommend not pursuing this further.

4. We recommended electronic distribution of division newsletters and routine mailings. This has been established and appears to be going well.

5. We recommended that the Elections Committee consider the value of moving towards electronic balloting. Doing so would require a by-laws change, and thus a vote from the membership. We have not heard back from the elections committee with regard to our recommendation.

6. We recommended that the Editorial and Publications committee study the issues relating to electronic distribution of the journal. Electronic distribution is a foregone conclusion, the best

we can do is be aware of the events as it unfolds.

7. We strongly and unanimously recommended retaining our host-city connection with ASA. Last year, the committee believed that the benefits of meeting in the same city as the ASA were far more compelling than the potential benefits of shifting to an independent meeting time/place. Given the recent decision by ASA to change locations for the 2006 annual meeting, we are deeply concerned about the impact this will have the SSSP (and other organizations) and urge the Board to respond in such a way that the damage to the Society is minimized.

8. Finally, last year, we recommended that a conversation between key officers take place to discuss future transition issues in the Executive Office should Tom Hood change his relationship with the Society. Tom has committed to remain in the Executive Office until 2008, so long as the Society is satisfied with this arrangement. The need for this conversation remains, however, and the chair of this Committee (Cook) will pursue such a conversation in the next 12 months.

New topics discussed in 2005.

→ *2006 Annual Meeting*: We discussed a variety of potential responses to the ASA announcement last week to leave San Francisco for 2006. We could honor our existing contract with the Stanford Court, though this would result in far fewer attendees at the meeting, and financial penalties for not making the room blocks, etc. We could move to whatever city the ASA is selecting and hope the Society can find a good contract at such a late date. We discussed the possibility of allying with other like-organizations (ABS, SWS, etc) to work out a mutually agreeable solution. This is not mutually exclusive of other ideas. We discussed the possibility of reaching out to other professional associations we belong to and being a liaison between memberships: information tables about the SSSP at other conferences, etc. We discussed being more “progressive” and action-oriented, and having more “hot topics” on the programs for the annual meeting in order to encourage session attendance. Ultimately, this committee urges the Board to **minimize the damage to the Society in responding to the ASA’s decision to cancel its contract in San Francisco.**

→ *Culture of Racism within the SSSP, in response to 2005 Minority Scholarship Award*: Last year, the President of SSSP charged the Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee with considering issues related to inclusion and ethnic diversity within the Society. In the packet of materials distributed to the 2005 Board, the POSPC included its response. The members of the Long Range Planning Committee found the response of the POSPC did not adequately respond to the endemic nature of racism and privilege within SSSP. This conversation was inspired by Salvador Vidal-Ortiz’s memo to the Board after the 2005 Minority Scholarship award presentation at the Banquet. This committee believes that the presentation should be officially condemned because it was offensive *and* because of the failure of participants to intervene. It was a painful event to witness, and we have an opportunity now to discuss and respond effectively to the problems revealed by that event. Specifically, we endorse the decision to maintain the focus of the Minority Scholarship Award to racial/ethnic diversity. **We recommend institutionalizing a conversation around privilege and disadvantage within the**

Society by way of program sessions, in all specific committee work, within all divisions, and future columns for newsletters. We recognize that a year of conversations is never going to be adequate to resolving the issues of privilege and power in the Society or in society as a whole, but we believe there is value in maintaining vigilance within our midst and being more proactive in achieving a non-racist community of scholar/activists.

→ **We recommend that the President solicit (from within committees) nominations of others who are interested in serving on and as chairs of committees throughout the Society, specifically with an eye toward ethnically diverse memberships and engagement with dynamics of privilege and power. We urge that all divisions and committees of the Society address issues of privilege within their capacities which may include collecting data, analyzing process, and agitating for change within the Society.** Claire Renzetti, President for 2005-2006, will focus on the issues surrounding racialized privilege in her presidential essay.

→ *Membership Issues:* Decline in renewed memberships in early career dues categories remains a concern to this Committee. We discussed a variety of strategies for addressing this issue. In particular, we contemplated the merits of having a “student support packet” available to student members, and a “new member initiative”, as well as the existing meeting mentor program. **We recommend that we conduct a “new member drive” at a different time in the calendar year from when we do our routine renewals.** We also discussed the Lifetime Membership category and are pleased to see it increasing, though slowly. Because some institutions will cover professional association membership costs, though not for a “lifetime”, **we recommend changing the name of that membership category to “Sustaining” members.**

→ *Journal Publisher’s and Treasurer’s Reports:* Because the financial vitality of the Society is so closely linking to the success of the Journal, we merged these two topics. This committee supports recommendations made by the Treasurer regarding institutional subscriptions and conference registration fees.

Finally, many of these conversations will continue throughout the coming year. We request re-authorization for one more year with the stipulation that this committee meet at a time during the regular conference days, and that we all pay our own room and travel costs (except for the student members of this committee, who will continue to be supported by the Society).

Thank you.