

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09

Social Psychology Section

Submitted by Karen A. Hegtvedt, 15 October 2009

Business Meeting, 9 August 2009

Held following Linda Molm's Cooley-Mead address, 63 section members attended the annual business meeting. The chair congratulated members of the section who received various ASA awards, including Sheldon Stryker, Cecilia Ridgeway, and Brian Powell. She expressed her delight at the success of the section's sessions that addressed how social psychology links with culture and with stratification. She also announced the new webmaster, Philip Brenner (University of Wisconsin), and reviewed progress on the search for a new newsletter editor. She recognized the efforts of the former webmaster, Tim Owens, and former newsletter editor, Kathy Kuipers, as well. The agenda largely included reports from various committees and announcements of slight changes to guidelines for section nominations and for the graduate paper award.

Alicia Cast announced that Daniel Shrank of the University of Georgia won the 2009 Graduate Paper Award. She also noted that 31 graduates submitted their work for consideration for the award. Amy Kroska, section secretary/treasurer, revealed the fiscal health of the section, with about \$11,500 in section funds after the ASA expenses (which include the council meeting meal, travel expenses for the graduate paper award winner, and plaques for the two section awards). Gary Fine, editor of *Social Psychology Quarterly*, reported on two innovations at the journal: an author's "Bill of Rights" and the web-based "Snaps," i.e., shorter versions of some articles designed for reading by undergraduates. He also announced that ASA was in the process of inviting nominations for the new editor of the journal. The chair expressed gratitude to all section members who participated on section committees.

Announced revisions to the graduate paper award committee included steps to make the chair's responsibilities clearer as well as how to deal with a large number of submissions. The latter included allowing the chair discretion in determining if a paper was social psychological in name only and limiting written comments to submitters to those whose papers are among the top contenders. Changes to the nominations guidelines included explicitly requesting from the section membership nominations and asking that nominations include information such as position, university affiliation, and research area so that committee members can more readily assess the diversity of the pool of nominations.

The business meeting concluded with announcements from the floor (with regard to related professional organizations and their upcoming meetings) and transitioning to the incoming chair, Dawn Robinson.

Section Council Meeting, 9 August 2009

The section council met over brunch at a local restaurant. The chair, chair-elect, incoming chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, newsletter editor, and four council members attended. Announcements were similar to those noted above for the business meeting. Amy Kroska reviewed the section's finances, indicating that reception cost (\$3300) was higher than in years past. She also proposed a budget for the coming year, focusing largely on anticipated 2009-10 costs for: reception at ASA, council meeting meal, plaques for Cooley-Mead award and graduate

student paper award, and travel expenses (up to \$800) for the graduate paper award winner. All council members agreed to these expenses.

The council discussed some issues that arose with regard to the fall 2008 nomination processes. In order to address the key issue of ensuring diversity in our ballot, we agreed to revise the guidelines for the committee to make sure that nominations are sought from the entire membership (as well as the nominating committee) and that more information accompany each nomination (e.g., name, position, university affiliation, general area of research). And, at the request of the chair of the Graduate Paper Award committee, the council also agreed to changes in the guidelines to allow the chair more discretion in dealing with submissions, especially when there are many submissions. The changes include initial screening by the chair to ensure that a submission is truly social psychological and limiting the extent to which written comments are provided to submitters (only to the papers that make the first cut of evaluations).

In the search for a new newsletter editor, the council discussed two issues: whether graduate students should serve in that capacity and whether the position could be held by co-editors. The council agreed that graduate students should not serve in that capacity and that co-editorship was feasible. Given the latter, the council agreed that the team of Shirley Keeton and Christabel Roglin should be offered the position of newsletter co-editors. Because neither Shirley nor Christabel was at the meetings, we agreed not to announce the new co-editors until after the chair contacted them.

The chair-elect, Dawn Robinson, concluded the meeting, thanking the current chair and announcing that she would be putting committees together in the early fall.

Nominations Procedures

The section's newly revised guidelines for nomination can be found on the section's website. The section chair names a nominations committee, with a member from the prior year serving as chair. In November, the committee chair has the section chair post to the section listserv a call for nominations while at the same time requesting nominations committee members to make nominations. All nominations should include the candidate's: name, position, affiliation, and general area of research (e.g., group processes; symbolic interaction; social structure and personality). By early December, the committee chair combines and alphabetizes the nominations and returns the list to the committee members who give each candidate a numerical priority rating (1=highest). Committee members return their ratings by mid-December and the chair will reports back to them the rank ordering of the nominees for each position. The chair will then contact potential nominees according to the list until two candidates for each vacancy are identified. Those candidates supply bio-sketches to the committee chair, who will submit them to ASA by its deadline.

Operating Budget

Given past expenditures and costs agreed upon by the council, the budget for 2009-2010 includes the following expenses: \$2500-3300 reception; \$200-250 council meeting meal; \$150-200 award plaques; \$800 travel expenses for graduate student paper winner.

Review of 2008-09 Section Activities

The section activities focused on programming for ASA sessions, securing replacements for the webmaster and newsletter editor, and revising guidelines for the Graduate Paper Award and for Nominations. The ASA sessions focused on demonstrating how social psychological processes pertain to culture and stratification as well as how they underlie arguments in substantive areas such as criminology and health. The invited sessions pertaining to culture and stratification attracted overflowing audiences. The open session pertaining to applications was less well attended (perhaps due to the 8:30 a.m. time slot) but involved interesting papers, many by younger scholars. The roundtables, organized jointly with the Emotions section, attracted a diverse array of papers.

The section was successful in finding talented volunteers to take over the responsibilities of webmaster (Philip Brenner) and newsletter editor (Shirley Keeton and Christabel Roglin). And, revisions to the guidelines were completed. Whether the revised guidelines are successful in addressing concerns about increasing diversity in nominations or about dealing with a high number of submissions for the graduate paper award will depend upon experiences in 2009-10.

Plans for the Coming Year

This year, the Social Psychology section will be making a push to build more cross-cutting ties with sociologists outside the section, with scholars outside of sociology, and with other organizations. We have instituted a new *ad hoc* Committee on External Affairs composed of members with ties to ISA, APA, NSF, NIMH, and many of ASA's other sections. This committee will help to keep the section informed about opportunities and happenings in these other organizations and sections and will also coordinate events such as joint receptions and joint paper sessions. We are also planning our ASA program to highlight and expand our intellectual diversity. An invited panel, including top scholars from the section and top social psychologists from psychology, will address cutting-edge cross-disciplinary advances. A session co-sponsored with Crime, Law, Deviance will feature work from members of both sections focused on micro-explanations of crime and deviance. This is the first of a two-year co-sponsorship agreement. A co-sponsored session with the Culture section will focus on ways in which social psychology research might be enriched by greater attention to cultural sociology. Finally, a co-sponsored roundtable session with the Emotion section will include work from both sections in a format that provides ample opportunity for cross-fertilization.