

September 11, 2007

Social Psychology Section
American Sociological Association

2006-2007 Annual Report

The Social Psychology Section had a very successful year, with no unusual challenges. In particular, program activities at the 2007 meetings in New York went extremely well.

Membership: The Secretary-Treasurer reported that section membership is already higher than that of last year, with 670 members as of June 30, 2007. This is almost thirty more members than at the same point in 2006. We are not at a point where we might realistically envision achieving 800 members, the level necessary to gain an additional session at the annual meeting. Nonetheless, we did have an extra session this year, due to our section day being scheduled on the final day of the meetings.

Finances: The section budget is in excellent shape, with \$12,971 prior to the meeting expenses, with expenses projected to be considerably less than this. Donations of royalties from several section members have bolstered the section budget. Specifically, we receive donations from John Delamater, University of Wisconsin, from royalties on the Handbook of Social Psychology, and from Peter Burke, University of California at Riverside, Timothy Owens, Purdue University, Richard Serpe, Kent State University and Peggy Thoits, University of North Carolina, from royalties on Advances in Identity Theory and Research. We are grateful for their generosity.

Newsletter: Kathy Kuipers (University of Montana) concluded her first year as editor of the section news letter. By all accounts, she is doing a terrific job, adding several new features and providing an engaging summary of our section activities.

Council Meeting: The Council meeting, held Monday morning August 13 at 7 AM, was attended by the Section Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, Chair-Elect, Webmaster, Secretary-Treasurer-Elect, and all but two of the elected members of the Council, plus one Council member-Elect. (One current Council member was unable to attend the ASA meetings this year.) The Council discussed several issues. First, we discussed whether to continue the practice of asking member's institutions to help support the Jobs Reception. Because the response this year was so strong (see below), we decided this was a successful experiment, well worth continuing. Second, we voted on a Council replacement, as described in the next section. Third, the several officers made reports on their activities. Fourth, we discussed the ever-intensifying expenses of hosting receptions at the conference hotels; this is, of course, a challenge for all the ASA sections. We agreed for now that the costs of losing attendees by moving to a non-conference site is not worth the financial savings, but agreed also to assess this issue each year. Fifth, Gary Alan Fine, the editor of Social Psychology Quarterly, gave an overview of the journal's situation since his term began one year ago. The highlight is that turnaround time is now down to

slightly less than two months, and that manuscript submissions are increasing. Sixth, the incoming Section Chair, Lisa Troyer, reviewed her plans for the coming year.

Council replacement: Because the new Chair-Elect is currently a member of the Section Council, the Section Chair identified a replacement for the 2007-08 year, and asked the Council to endorse this appointment. The Council agreed. Jody Clay-Warner will now serve as a one-year replacement for Karen Hegtvedt on the Social Psychology Section Council. Also, Tim Owens has announced he will step down as Section Webmaster sometime during the coming year, as soon as a replacement has been found. We will post a call for applications in the section newsletter and on the section website.

Business Meeting: The Business Meeting was held in the last time slot of the Annual Meeting, typically not an ideal time slot to encourage attendance. However, a full 81 section members attended the Business Meeting. As we have done for the past several years, we convene the Business Meeting first, and then follow with the Cooley-Mead Address. This practice has led to excellent attendance at the Business Meeting, as anticipated. I attach a copy of the agenda for the Business Meeting.

This agenda basically mirrored that of the Council meeting. In addition, I began with a very brief overview of the section structure of the ASA, noting that Social Psychology was the first “modern” section, having begun in 1958. This makes 2008 our 50th anniversary, a mark well worth celebrating at the 2008 meetings.

We noted that the two sociologists elected to the National Academy of Sciences this year were Karen Cook and James House, both eminent social psychologists, both former Section Chairs, and both recipients of the Cooley-Mead Award. And, Joseph Berger, another eminent social psychologist, is the recipient this year of the ASA’s W.E.B. Dubois Award for Distinguished Scholarship. The Graduate Student Paper Award and the Cooley-Mead Award were both presented (details below).

Program: The Section offered three formal paper sessions, focusing on “Critical Social Psychology” (organized by Peter Callero), “Technical & Methodological Advances in Social Psychological Research” (organized by Lisa Troyer), “Critical Social Psychological Perspectives on Social Power and Justice” (organized by Karen Hegtvedt), as well as a roundtable session (organized by Judy Howard, Dan Renfrow, and Deborah Warnock). In addition, we organized a memorial session for Spencer Cahill, a devoted social psychologist and sociologist who, at the time of his death, was the editor of Social Psychology Quarterly. Several of his colleagues and former students offered moving tributes to his many contributions and many of those who attended also spoke about their memories. There were also two regular Social Psychology sessions sponsored by the ASA, one on “Social Structure and Personality” and one on “Racial and Ethnic Identities” (both organized by Deborah Carr).

Jobs Reception: This was the third year during which the Section sponsored a reception for graduate students currently on the job market and institutions that are posting job searches. The attendance has increased each year and this year’s reception was no

exception. The reception, held at Papillon Bistro, was attended by at least 50 members and all found it to be a major success. The reception expenses were covered almost entirely by donations from the departments of section members, making this a truly win-win endeavor.

Section Reception: The Section held its reception in collaboration with the Section on Emotions. Attendance was excellent.

Cooley-Mead Award: The Cooley-Mead Award is given to an individual who has made lifetime contributions to distinguished scholarship in social psychology. This year the award went to James S. House at the University of Michigan. His talk, "Sociology, Psychology, Social Psychology, Economics, and Social Science: 20th Century Progress and Problems, 21st Century Prospects" was delivered at the award ceremony following the Business Meeting. This paper will be submitted for publication in Social Psychology Quarterly.

The Graduate Student Award: The Graduate Student Award is given for an article-length paper on any area of social psychology. This year the award went to Steven Hoffman, Northwestern University, for his paper "How to Punch Someone and Stay Friends: An Inductive Theory of Simulation." A runner-up certificate was also presented to Yan Li, Stanford University, for his paper, "Ambivalent Interracial Stereotyping: Evidence from the Los Angeles Study of Urban Inequality." The prize includes a plaque and a cash award to help with the expenses of attending the ASA meetings.

New Officers: As noted, Karen Hegtvedt was elected Chair-Elect of the Section. Martha Foschi and Matthew Hunt were elected to the Section Council. Amy Kroska was elected as Secretary-Treasurer-Elect. With Council's endorsement, I appointed Jody Clay-Warner to serve out Karen Hegtvedt's remaining year on the Section Council.

Concluding Thoughts: As I noted in my remarks at the Section Business Meeting, there were virtually no instances throughout the year in which I asked someone to take on a task for the Section, whether large or small, when they responded with anything other than prompt and enthusiastic agreement. I am grateful to all our Section Members for their heartfelt support of our activities.

Respectfully,

Judith A. Howard
Social Psychology Section Chair, 2006-07