
History of Psychology

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The Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology and Francis Cecil Sumner

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In 1939, a psychologist could become a member of the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SSPP) automatically with the endorsement of two members, payment of dues, and membership in the American Psychological Association (APA). Non-APA members with endorsements and payment of dues had to be voted in by the membership. In 1940, the rules for admission were changed to eliminate the automatic membership for APA members. Francis Cecil Sumner, the first African American PhD in psychology, qualified for SSPP membership as a member of the APA in 1939, but the SSPP's council delayed his membership and introduced the amendment to its constitution that eliminated Sumner's route to membership. This article examines the circumstances surrounding council's actions and the role that Sumner's application for membership played in it as an example of the role that race and discrimination played in the decision to change the route to SSPP membership for members of the APA.

Founded in 1904, the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SSPP) is the oldest regional organization serving psychologists in the United States (Harris & Alluisi, 1964; Miner, 1931; Pate, 1993). Its principal founder, Edward F. Buchner, earned a PhD degree in philosophy at Yale University (1893). When the SSPP was founded, Buchner was a professor of philosophy and education at University of Alabama (Pate, 1993); he also worked as a psychologist (Buchner, 1903). The SSPP's first president was James Mark Baldwin. Other presidents of the SSPP whose names may be recognized by psychologists and listed here in the order of their presidencies of the SSPP were Shepherd Ivory Franz, John B. Watson, E. K.

Strong Jr., Knight Dunlap, J. F. Dashiell, Karl Dalenbach, and Ulric Neisser.¹ Two women prominent in the history of psychology, Christine Ladd-Franklin and Celestia S. Parrish, were among the SSPP's 36 charter members.

The current requirements for membership in the SSPP are stipulated in its constitution:

In order to be eligible for membership, candidates must be engaged professionally in Philosophy and/or Psychology, or provide evidence of a substantially equivalent interest and competence. Normally this is interpreted to mean that the applicant has a Ph.D. degree or a doctoral degree in related areas, and is devoting a major

professional effort in teaching, research, and/or practice. ("Article II: Membership" of the SSPP constitution, <http://southernsociety.org>)

Graduate students in fields related primarily to philosophy or psychology may apply for associate membership. Eligibility of applicants is usually determined by the treasurer, primarily because the first year's dues must accompany an application for membership. When eligibility is unclear, the application is considered by the SSPP's governing council. Usually, applications meeting the requirements in the constitution are accepted without question.

In 1939, when Francis Cecil Sumner, the first African American to earn a PhD in psychology, applied for membership in the SSPP, the membership application process was very different. Two routes to membership were available in 1939. In both cases, an application form had to be endorsed by two members of the SSPP, and the first year's dues had to accompany the application. The difference between the two routes to membership was that applicants who were members of the American Psychological Association (APA) or the American Philosophical Association were admitted automatically to the SSPP, but applicants who were not members of either of the two national organizations had to be recommended by the council and voted in by the membership during the annual business meeting.

Having the requisite endorsement of two SSPP members, having paid the first year's dues, and being a member of the APA qualified Sumner automatically for membership in the SSPP. However, members of the SSPP's governing council delayed Sumner's membership approval in 1939 and proposed an amendment to the SSPP constitution that eliminated the policy of granting automatic SSPP membership to applicants who were members of either of the two national organizations. Coincidentally, and apparently because their racial classifications were unclear, the council also delayed the memberships of two "men" because they taught at Fisk University, which served African American students. Not only were those candidates white, but one was a woman; nevertheless, members of council consistently referred to them as the "men" from Fisk. They were Lily Brunschwig and Eli S. Marks, and they were married to each other. However, the primary trigger for initiating the pro-

posal for eliminating the automatic membership for APA members was Sumner's application.

Francis Cecil Sumner

Sumner was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, on December 7, 1895. His parents were David A. Sumner (1862–1950) and Ellen Jarvis Sumner (1868–1949). Francis Sumner attended elementary schools in Norfolk, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Plainfield, New Jersey. He received the equivalent of a secondary school education via private instruction with his father and gained admission by examination to Lincoln University in 1911 at age 15. He graduated in 1915 with an AB degree magna cum laude and with special honors in English, modern languages, Greek, Latin, and philosophy. He received a second AB degree at Clark University (Worcester, Massachusetts) in 1916, and he received an AM degree from Lincoln University in 1917. Sumner received the PhD degree in psychology from Clark University in 1920 with G. Stanley Hall as his "major professor" and E. G. Boring, John W. Baird, Samuel W. Fernberger, and Karl Karlson as his "minor professors" (Sumner, 1951).²

While studying for the PhD, Sumner was drafted into the U.S. Army in the summer of 1918 (see Sawyer, 2000, for related discussion). With Hall's concurrence, Sumner tried to enroll in officer's candidate school, but it was too late and Sumner was soon shipped to France (Guthrie, 2004). Sumner served in the 808th Pioneer Infantry as a sergeant (Sumner, 1951), apparently on a railroad construction crew. It is a sad irony of racial segregation in the U.S. military during World War I that Sumner, an expert in the languages of the three major combatants (English, French, and German), was not used as a military interpreter or translator. Pioneer infantry units were largely noncombat units (Barbeau & Henri, 1996). Nevertheless, 7 of 17 Pioneer Infantry units received combat ribbons for bravery under fire. Barbeau and Henri (1996) did not specify which units, but based on descriptions they provided of the 808th serving well under heavy enemy fire and on Sumner's account of experiencing bombardment (quoted in Guthrie, 2004, p. 222) it seems likely that members of the 808th Pioneers received combat ribbons. Consistent with this record of service, Sumner was buried with a military honor guard in the Arlington National Cemetery (Guthrie, 2004).

After receiving the PhD from Clark University on June 14, 1920 (Guthrie, 2004), Sumner served on the faculties of Wilberforce University (Ohio) in 1920–1921 and West Virginia State College from 1921 to 1928; he also taught during summer session at Southern University (Louisiana) in 1921. In 1928 he became an associate professor at Howard University (Washington, D.C.). He was promoted to professor in 1931 and served first as acting department head, then as department head from 1928 until he died of cardiac arrest while shoveling snow on January 12, 1954 (Sumner, 1951; Guthrie, 2004). Sumner was a fellow in the APA and in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Additionally, he was a member of the Eastern Psychological Association, the SSPP, and the District of Columbia Psychological Association.

Francis Cecil Sumner and the SSPP

Eight letters³ that were written in September and October 1939 pertaining to the SSPP council's actions related to Sumner and the proposed constitutional amendment pertaining to membership requirements and the published proceedings of the 1939 and 1940 SSPP meetings (Heinlein, 1939; Munn, 1940) provide the context for the concern over Sumner's application for membership in the SSPP. Incoming president Marjorie S. Harris, who wrote five of the letters in which Sumner's membership application was discussed, attended the 1939 meeting of the governing council of the SSPP. Additional council members at the 1939 meeting who wrote no letters cited here but who were mentioned in some of the letters were Frank A. Geldard (SSPP president 1939), Herbert C. Sanborn (SSPP president 1923 and council member 1939), and Norman L. Munn, who became secretary-treasurer of the SSPP after the 1939 meeting. One new council member, whose term began after the 1939 meeting of the SSPP, was Louis O. Kattsoff. Kattsoff wrote one of the letters. Albert G. A. Balz, a philosopher at the University of Virginia and SSPP president in 1936, wrote two of the eight letters, presumably because president Marjorie Harris had sought his advice. To summarize, the eight letters were written by Harris (5), Balz (2), and Kattsoff (1). Mentioned in the letters by name were Geldard, Munn, Sanborn, and Sumner. Lily Brunschwig and Eli Marks were not mentioned by name but were referred to in the letters as the "men" from Fisk University.

Here is how the proposed amendment was reported in the 1939 SSPP proceedings (Heinlein, 1939, p. 591).

The Council recommended that Article II. Section 2. of the Constitution be amended to read as follows: "Candidates for membership shall be proposed by two members of the Society and recommended by the Council before their names are voted upon by the Society."

The amendment would eliminate the route that Sumner, Brunschwig, and Marks had used to become members of the SSPP. The SSPP constitution required that amendments had to be approved at two consecutive meetings. The amendment was approved at the 1939 meeting, and a second vote was to be taken at the 1940 meeting. Unless approved both times, the new amendment would not take effect. Apparently, the reasons stated at the 1939 meeting to justify the amendment pertained only to what was considered to be inequitable treatment of the SSPP by the APA, namely that the APA did not automatically grant membership to members of the SSPP (Miner, 1941). However, that was not the reason that instigated the proposed constitutional amendment.

On September 28, 1939, President Marjorie S. Harris, a philosopher at Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia, sent a letter to the members of the council that began as follows (Harris, 1939a):

When you read this letter you will realize why I am asking you to treat the contents as confidential; to say nothing about them except to members of the Council.

Harris reviewed and explained why an amendment was introduced by the council that eliminated the automatic membership pathway for members of the APA to membership in the SSPP. The only reason she gave for the proposed amendment at this point pertained to the perceived "subordinate position" of the SSPP compared with the APA. However, Harris began the next paragraph as follows:

As for the negro question which initiated this discussion we decided two things: (1) that it should not be discussed on the floor at the annual business meeting of the Society lest the

discussion get into the newspapers and give a distorted view of the Society's attitude and hence undesirable publicity; (2) that whatever the private views of the members of the Society on the negro question, the Society can function most effectively if it accepts the fact that hotels and some colleges would not admit a colored man to public rooms on the same footing with white men.

Regarding the question of approving the memberships of Sumner, Brunswick, and Marks, Harris continued,

Dr. Munn [the SSPP's newly elected secretary-treasurer] writes me that, of the three men [Brunswick was a woman] whose particular cases suggested the advisability of revising this rule, two are white and one is colored. . . . The colored man—Dr. Sumner has filled in the application blank, has offered the two necessary Endorsements and has sent his dues. Hence, he is legally a member. . . . One man has threatened to resign and says others will follow unless we clear up Sumner's status. Both Dr. Munn and Dr. Sanborn think we should admit that he is a member.

Munn was a psychologist and Sanborn was a philosopher at Vanderbilt University. It is unclear whether the "man" and "others" mentioned in Harris's letter who had threatened to resign approved or disapproved of Sumner's admission to the SSPP, but considering Harris's letter in general, it seems likely that they approved of Sumner's membership. In any case, new council member Louis O. Kattsoff (philosopher at the University of North Carolina), who was not a council member at the 1939 meeting, clearly approved of Sumner's membership and was critical of those who had hesitated to approve it. Kattsoff responded strongly to Harris's (1939a) letter. Among other matters that he addressed, Kattsoff (1939) wrote,

I wish to state strongly that the contents of the letter [Harris, 1939a] do not deserve to be treated confidentially, although I shall do so until I hear further from you. Furthermore, it is my opinion that the Council has no justification for its actions in keeping this pseudo-problem

from being presented to the Society. The fear of undesirable publicity is not one worthy of philosophers who believe in principles. I call it a pseudo-problem because it is admitted that Dr. Sumner is a member. Apparently the only reason for not admitting at once that he is a member is prejudice rationalized on the basis of the effective functioning of the Society. It seems to me that the Society should immediately accept the fact that Dr. Sumner is a member or else cease to call itself a Society of *Philosophy* and *Psychology*.

Kattsoff continued,

[Regarding the] reason for revising the membership rule, I do not recall whether I voted for or against the revision. . . . Had I known the facts in the matter—namely that the advisability of revising the rule was suggested by this case—I certainly would not have voted for the revision. Furthermore, I am certain many others would feel as I do. In all honesty, the membership rule should be brought up again and the facts disclosed to the Society. A rule which gives the Council the authority to reject a man on the basis of race, color, or creed is a violation of everything which *Philosophy* represents.

Kattsoff continued,

One of the astounding things about your letter is the intimation that the status of the white men was questioned because they taught at Fisk. In my opinion, the Council should not merely accept these men but apologize for its action.

Apparently, Harris had sought the advice of Albert Balz, a philosopher at the University of Virginia and former president of the SSPP (1936), regarding Sumner's membership and the proposed amendment to the SSPP constitution. Balz (1939a) had addressed those matters in a letter to Herbert C. Sanborn, and he had replied to Harris's request for advice by sending her a copy of the letter he had written to Sanborn.

In that letter, Balz (1939a) agreed with him that Dr. Sumner was a member and that he should be notified of his membership. He also agreed that "no explanation for the delay [in notifying Sumner] should be

offered save one to the effect that in the change of secretaries, confusion arose." This was a fabrication. Balz wrote at length about the need to justify publicly the proposed constitutional amendment by emphasizing the unequal treatment by the APA of SSPP members and the possible wisdom of restricting "membership to persons (say) east of the Mississippi and South of the Potomac, in order to insure a more compact body." Balz (1939a) continued,

I of course . . . am merely trying to illustrate my point that the proposed revision, although in fact *occasioned* by the question of admission of negroes is really coincident of that consideration, and is a general move to a more prudent control of membership in general.

Balz disagreed with Sanborn on the issue of whether the secretary should say anything to Sumner about likely difficulties in his attending meetings because of hotel policies and the like, noting that "it may be more prudent to assume that Dr. Sumner will realize all this for himself." He then added, "Let us hope that the question does not arise."

Next Balz considered the fact that the new amendment was not in effect and would not be unless and until it was approved a second time at the 1940 meeting. He considered the possibility that new applications might arrive before the amendment was approved and noted, "Should there be negroes among such applicants, we will be in a jam!"

In a later paragraph, Balz wrote,

Perhaps I am unnecessarily alarmed. I am convinced, however, that no good, either for our society, nor the general cause of the negro would come of having a public issue of this matter.

Finally, Balz concluded his letter to Sanborn:

We are in hearty agreement I am sure. I conjecture that Miss Harris is thinking in a similar fashion. Geldard with whom I have talked, would subscribe, I think, to everything above. [Frank A. Geldard, a psychologist at the University of Virginia, was president of the SSPP in 1939.]

In a reply to Balz, Harris (1939b) thanked him for the copy of his letter to Sanborn but commented only

on Balz's expressed concern about the possibility of black applicants before the constitutional change had been implemented. She indicated that she had similar concerns and thanked him for his suggested ways to stall or prevent such applications from being acted upon (these suggestions were in Balz's letter to Sanborn but are not quoted here). She also noted that she had some ideas about handling such applications that she might send in a letter or that they might discuss in person later.

After writing the aforementioned reply, Harris received Kattsoff's (1939) letter, which alarmed her. Harris (1939c) wrote again to Balz and enclosed Kattsoff's letter, requesting that it be returned. Her first, one-sentence paragraph is less than clear; however, considered in the context of her second paragraph, it is reasonable to infer that she was disturbed by Kattsoff's letter.

I enclose Mr. Kattsoff's letter . . . part of my reply to him in the form of a letter to members of Council—the rest of my reply was a short note to this effect: "Mr. Kattsoff: Shall I send this letter to members of the Council or are you going to be more of a Philosopher?" [The reference to her letter to members of the council appears to have resulted in two letters, one to "members" of the council and another to "new" members of the council. These were undated.]⁴

In the second paragraph Harris continued,

If he retracts his threat to make the contents of my letter public—I think the fact of its inaccuracy [not specified by Harris] will help there—shall I send out the letter to the new members of Council, Kattsoff included, and this would have to go to the old members, or have I already done too much letter writing?

Kattsoff had not threatened to make the contents of Harris's letter to council public. As quoted earlier, Kattsoff said that it did not deserve to be confidential but that he would regard it as such until he heard further from her.

Balz (1939b) then wrote a formal letter addressed to Harris in her capacity as president of the SSPP. The letter iterated much of what had been written less formally in his letter to Sanborn. It consisted of six numbered sections plus a closing paragraph. Section

5, the longest, included three subsections designated a, b, and c. Subsections b and c include information not expressed or not expressed as extensively in his earlier letter to Sanborn. Portions of these subsections will be quoted here.

(b) It may well be the case that the admission of negro members, in a Society so regional as ours, may do the general cause of the negro more harm than good. This is a matter of opinion, but it is, and certainly can be a matter of honest opinion. I have no doubt that every member of the society is genuinely in the cause of social justice and advancement for the negro race. . . .

(c) Admission of the negro will almost certainly produce situations of extreme embarrassment for such negro members. I need but refer to certain laws concerning assembly, to laws, rules or what they [*sic*] be followed by hotels not merely in the South but in fact throughout the country. If our present negro member attends our meetings, the membership will certainly inflict no humiliation upon him. If he presents a paper, we shall listen and estimate for what it is worth as a contribution to Philosophy and Psychology. But we shall not be able to prevent the embarrassments inherent in the conditions under which SSPP meets.

Two pieces of correspondence remain to be considered, both by Harris, one addressed "To the Members of Council" (Harris, n.d.-a) and another addressed "To the New Members of Council" (Harris, n.d.-b). The two letters appear to have been written hastily (e.g., unclear statements, more errors than usual, one was on Randolph-Macon Woman's College letterhead but the other was not) and may have been only drafts sent to Balz for his consideration. They are considered here only from the standpoint of any additional insight they may provide regarding Harris's state of mind.

In her letter to the council (Harris, n.d.-a), she wrote little that is new here but incorporated an alternative fabrication to Balz's to explain the delay in notifying Sumner of his membership. Balz's fabrication was that the delay in notifying Sumner was caused by confusion associated with the change of

secretary-treasurer. Harris's was, "It is just a question as to what the secretary had time to do." Harris's third paragraph included an apparent reference to Kattsoff.

Nobody who was not at the 1939 meeting Council [Kattsoff's council membership began after the 1939 meeting] has an ethical right to question the wisdom of the Council; no one has a right to regard the views of the Council narrow and distorted. No one has a right to assume that the Society was treated unfairly. [This is an apparent reference to Kattsoff's statement that he did not know the reason for the amendment when it was presented for a vote by the members of the SSPP and that had he known he would have voted against it.] If one can name a place where the negro is treated more tolerantly than in the South I would like him to do it. I who say this am a New Englander.

In Harris's letter to the new members of the council (Harris, n.d.-b) she seemingly lectured about what is expected of new members on the council. Here are two examples, one from each of the first two paragraphs:

What we have tried to do in our Council meetings is "to build the communal mind."

I have never worked with a group of people where one found a better spirit of "communanimity"—I suppose I am coining that word—unanimity sounds too narrow for what I have experienced in my short time on Council.

This appears to be Harris's veiled way of telling Kattsoff that he needed to conform. Whether or not that was intended for Kattsoff, the next paragraph surely was.

A grave situation has arisen in connection with my first Council letter, I have received a threat of making its contents public. [Again, Kattsoff made no such threat.] On the basis of my letter certain condemnations have been made. Let me iterate; that letter is not a letter from one private individual to another private individual; it is a letter from a presiding officer to Council members who have no right to act as individuals with regard to any of its contents.

In ending her letter to the new members, Harris outlined two courses of action that were open to her. The first was to call a council meeting at once or to call one before the regular council meeting at the beginning of the 1940 meeting of the SSPP. It is not known whether either meeting occurred. What is known is that Sumner's, Brunschwig's, and Marks's memberships were announced without special comment at the 1940 SSPP meeting and were reported in the published proceedings (Munn, 1940). Additionally, the amendment to the SSPP constitution quoted earlier was again passed and hence became the new rule guiding membership applications. Essentially, it eliminated the route to membership that Sumner and others had used and continued the other requirements for membership, namely of having an application endorsed by two SSPP members, a favorable recommendation by the council, and a favorable vote by the membership at the annual business meeting.

Apparently, Kattsoff did not attend the 1940 meeting, as his name does not appear in the published proceedings (Munn, 1940). He was not listed among those attending the 1940 meeting of the council. Possibly, he resigned from the council and decided to be absent from the 1940 meeting when the amendment was voted on the requisite second time. Kattsoff's name does appear twice in the proceedings of the 1941 meeting (Munn, 1941) but not in ways related to this issue. It is not known whether Sumner ever attended a meeting of the SSPP. A most favorable opportunity might have been to attend the 1941 meeting, which was held in Washington, D.C., but his name does not appear in the 18 pages of published proceedings; however, that does not establish that he was not present at the meeting.

Assessing Council Members' Racial Sensibilities

Obviously, the racial and ethnic sensibilities of people living in the United States in 1939 should not be judged by appropriate sensibilities in 2010. Not only was there strong prejudice against African Americans, but anti-Semitism negatively affected university hiring practices in North America (Winston, 1996, 1998; Zimmerman, 2007). Whether or not a candidate for an academic position was known to be a Jew, merely having a Jewish-sounding name was seen to be an obstacle to employment. Winston (1996, p. 38) noted

that E. G. Boring had to clarify in a letter of reference for H. E. Israel that "He is *not* a Jew." In another example (Bruce, 1999) of someone who was also not a Jew, Harry F. Israel's (PhD 1930) graduate advisors at Stanford University urged him to change his last name; he changed his last name to Harlow and was hired in 1930 by the University of Wisconsin. Harlow had a distinguished career that included receiving the APA's Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award in 1960 and a National Medal of Science in 1966 (Bruce, 1999). In short, racial, ethnic, and religious prejudices were deep and abiding in the United States (McVeigh, 2009) and Canada (Zimmerman, 2007) for much, perhaps most, of the 20th century. In addition to prejudice against African Americans and Jews, many of the Ku Klux Klan's activities were directed against Catholics (McVeigh, 2009; Baergen, 2000).

Racial segregation was legal in the United States in 1939, based on the Supreme Court's 1896 decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Pratt, 2005). Additionally, during the Civil War, World War I, and World War II, units of the U.S. military services were racially segregated. Only by executive order in 1948 did president Harry S. Truman racially integrate the U.S. military services. Racial segregation persisted in public schools and other facilities, public and private, until the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 ended racial segregation in public schools (Hutchinson, 2005).⁵ Sawyer (2000) reported that in published articles Sumner had argued for segregated schools, although Sawyer concluded that Sumner had done so to gain better economic support for the African American schools and colleges and that his advocacy for segregated schools did not reflect his private beliefs.

Concerning the sensibilities of those who wrote or were mentioned in the correspondence considered here, it is reasonable to assume that Kattsoff's sympathies were very much with Sumner and African Americans in general. There is also evidence that Norman L. Munn's sympathies would have been similar to Kattsoff's. Munn, a native Australian, earned his PhD (1930) at Clark University under the supervision of W. S. Hunter. After serving as an assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh, Munn relocated to Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee (1936-1938). In his autobiography, Munn (1980) wrote,

In Pittsburgh I had taught black students as well as white and associated with them outside of the classrooms in various social gatherings. They came to my office like other students to discuss their problems. (p. 92)

Munn (1980) also recounted how a colleague at Peabody College had warned him that he was “skating on thin ice by having a nigger in his office” (p. 92). Munn explained that the person in his office was

a Phi Beta Kappa and Ph.D. in psychology from Brown University and a newly-appointed psychologist at Fisk, the noted Negro university in Nashville. She had been a student of Hunter’s and I had invited her to my office because he had asked me to help her get started. . . . I also visited her at Fisk. (p. 92)

As for the others, it is reasonable to assume that if they wanted to keep their jobs at Southern universities they had little choice but to accept racial segregation as a fact of life (e.g., see “Cocking affair” in Dyer, 1985). Based on comments in Kattsoff’s letter (1939) and Harris’s first letter (1939a), it is reasonable to assume that many members of the SSPP would have approved Sumner’s membership. It is fair also to assume that, as Balz wrote, had Sumner attended an SSPP meeting, the members would not “inflict humiliation upon him” and would evaluate his presentations as they would those of any other member of the SSPP.

Closing Remarks

It may be reasonable to think that the principal motives for the concerns of council members about Sumner joining the SSPP were focused on anticipated problems that his race might cause the SSPP in a racially segregated South and their genuine concern about indignities to which Sumner might be subjected. At that time, SSPP meetings were often held on the campuses of universities that would not be racially integrated until the 1960s, and even then integration usually occurred under court order and was often accompanied by violence. Most will recall the violence and widespread upheaval associated with the civil rights movement in the South in the early to mid-1960s. In the climate of 1939, it would be reasonable for members of SSPP’s council to have

serious concerns for the well-being of the SSPP and Sumner and to act in what they believed to be the best interests of both.

Nevertheless, the preceding is not meant to suggest that council members may not have been racially prejudiced. In 1939 as well as in 2010, racism and anti-Semitism in America ranged from passive, based on ignorance, to violent. Broadcast and political personalities appear regularly in the news today for making controversial remarks that reflect such prejudices; some have been fired, such as Don Imus from MSNBC and Rick Sanchez from CNN, who made racist (Imus) and anti-Semitic (Sanchez) remarks. To say the least, until the 1960s most Southerners accepted the caste system that existed between blacks and whites, a system that was well represented in the film *Driving Miss Daisy*. It is reasonable to assume that all members of the council, Kattsoff and Munn included, accepted many aspects of that racial caste system as “the way of life” in the South. The rare white person to challenge racial injustices faced ostracism and violence (e.g., Clarence Jordan, leader of the racially integrated Koionia Farm in Georgia in the 1950s; <http://www.koioniapartners.org/History/brief.html>).

Despite expressed concern for Sumner’s comfort and well-being as a member of the SSPP, council members betrayed racial bias in other things they did and wrote. Aside from the unjustified delay in accepting and announcing Sumner’s membership in the SSPP (it should have been announced at the 1939 meeting and published in the 1939 SSPP proceedings), Harris, Balz, and Sanborn were clearly concerned about the possibility of additional black applicants before the new admission amendment could be implemented. Harris’s favorable comparison of the treatment of blacks in the South and in New England was patronizingly racist. The deception practiced by members of council in their public justifications for changing the membership rule seems inexcusable by any criterion. Even Kattsoff may have reflected a bit of racial bias in that his letter referred to the discrimination against the “white men” from Fisk as “astounding,” and he called for an immediate apology to them, something he did not do with regard to Sumner; however, that may have been a mere oversight.

The SSPP today is highly receptive to African American members, although such members con-

tinue to be rare. Some effort has been made to determine, after Sumner, who was the next African American psychologist to join the SSPP. Because application forms did not and do not ask for a person's race or ethnic background, there may be no such record, and only tentative guesses can be offered here based on the memories of long-time members. I have been a regularly attending member of the SSPP since 1964, and the only two African American members I can recall with confidence are Alva T. Hughes (PhD 1988, University of Maryland), currently a professor of psychology at Randolph–Macon College in Ashland, Virginia (not Randolph–Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia, where Harris was located) who joined the SSPP in 1992, and Harold H. Greene (PhD 1996, University of Georgia), an associate professor at the University of Detroit Mercy who joined the SSPP in 1996. Greene, who is originally from Sierra Leone, Africa, is a Canadian citizen. Both were elected to 3-year terms on the SSPP's governing council, and Greene was the recipient in 1998 of the SSPP's only annual research award for psychologists.

NOTES

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1. In recent years, annually updated lists of former presidents have been included in the annual meeting program booklets.

2. A photocopy of Sumner's (1951) unpublished "Life Sketch," comparable to a curriculum vitae, was provided to the author on July 15, 2010, by Professor Leslie Hicks of Howard University.

3. The eight letters cited here were provided by James L. Pate, SSPP archivist for psychology. Pate obtained the letters from Albert G. A. Balz's papers in Special Collections of the University of Virginia Library.

4. These undated letters appear to have been included with Harris's (1939c) letter to Balz to seek his comments on the letters before sending them to members of the council. The copies used here are among Balz's papers archived at the University of Virginia. It is not known whether they were ever sent to council members or, if sent, whether they had been revised. However, it does seem likely that some version, original or revised, of the two was mailed to council members.

5. It is fitting to note that the psychological research (known informally as the "doll studies") that had an essential role in the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing racial segregation in public schools was conducted by a husband and wife, Kenneth Clark and Mamie Phipps Clark. Sumner

supervised Kenneth Clark's master's thesis. The doll studies originated with Mamie Phipps's master's thesis (1939) at Howard University (Hopkins, Ross, & Hicks, 1992). Phipps's thesis was supervised by Max Meenes, a Polish immigrant and Clark University PhD (1926; Bayton, 1975). Because the department was so small, Sumner was probably one of Mamie Phipps's graduate advisors.

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