

Steve Posavac, Society of Consumer Psychology, APA Div.23, President 2008

1. What are your most enduring SCP or APA Division 23 memories?

Three memories from my presidency really stick out. First, working with then *JCP* editor C.W. Park was simply a great experience. C.W. is a terrific human being – smart, creative, and totally committed to advancing the journal and the society. Whether discussing strategy over outstanding meals (and realistically too much wine), or dealing with mundane things via email, it was a great partnership.

Second, I really enjoyed working with the co-chairs I appointed to run our conference. I asked Alex Chernev, Michal Herzstein, and Shelly Jain to serve as chairs because they are each such super intelligent and capable people. They pulled together really well, and did a fantastic job organizing a wonderful conference. The conference was a best-case managerial experience for me – beg rock stars to work on a project, then once they agree, put your feet up and watch them excel.

Finally, crafting a presidential address was memorable because, man, you really don't want to lay an egg. My talk was predicated on a model of what drives happiness and unhappiness in our profession that was based on a series of depth interviews that I conducted with faculty around the country. My address, and the *JCP* paper based on it (“On Values and Phenomenology”), identified core values shared by consumer psychologists, the roadblocks that cause disconnects between individuals' values and their professional experiences, common experiential traps that undermine happiness, and prescriptive advice for creating departments that facilitate productivity and well-being. One conference attendee told me that I sounded like a preacher during my address, which I took as a compliment. In the final analysis, I believe that an important measure of our lives is simply whether others are happier or unhappier as a result of their interactions with us. My hope in my presidential address was to promote a more collectivist perspective, and argue that we're better off as a profession, and as individuals, when we work together in specific ways to create and sustain functional departments.

2. Were there any key initiatives or accomplishments during your presidency?

My overarching goal for my presidency was to create structures that would be of enduring value in increasing SCP's impact as well as its value for the consumer research community. In my mind, nurturing the quality and reputation of *JCP* is a first-order duty for the SCP president. When I was elected president, *JCP* was the only “A” level marketing journal that did not offer an annual award for the best contribution, and was thus foregoing opportunities to both recognize excellence among authors, and send a signal regarding the journal itself. The Executive Board and I were able to hammer out the logistics of judging and awarding such a prize for *JCP*. Perhaps most important, I had the pleasure of working with C.W. Park in discussing the specifics of his landmark gift that perpetually endows *JCP*'s Park Award

for Outstanding Contribution, as well as the Park Young Contributor Award, which have been given annually since 2009.

A second priority during my time as SCP President was enhancing the value the society adds for Ph.D. students. To this end, I believed that we could launch a new doctoral consortium held immediately prior to our annual conference. In addition to regular conference chair appointments, I also appointed a consortium chair, and shared my hopes for what could be achieved. Specific foci were career development targeted to students as a function of how many years they had spent in training, and overviews of key research areas with a focus on helping students understand what important topics would likely emerge, and be sought by editors, in coming years. A priori we would have been happy with 15 attendees, and thrilled with 25. The conference chairs did a great job taking the idea from germination to fruition, and over 80 doctoral students attended our first consortium. Participants raved about the program, and although I have been engaged in several program launches at different levels over the years, the success of the consortium was particularly meaningful personally.

3. Were there any significant developments or activities related to other conferences?

The one significant curveball I had to deal with as president was the underwhelming response I got after disseminating a call for proposals to chair and host the Advertising and Consumer Psychology conference. I didn't get any. So I decided to chair the conference myself, and it was a great experience. The idea was instead of focusing on a narrow research area, to raise the perspective up to 35,000 feet with the goal of creating summaries of research streams that would be useful for managers as well as academics. The conference and subsequent book were titled, "Cracking the Code, Leveraging Consumer Psychology to Drive Profitability." The chapters each featured an expert in a given area summarizing what we know conceptually about a given topic and what it means tactically for managers. My hope was to put a focus on relevance in consumer psychology research, and take the valuable contributions researchers make out of the ivory tower and into the boardroom. The project was blessed with a fantastic set of authors whose contributions far exceeded my initial hopes.