



SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY DIVISION

of the Society for the Study of Social Problems

SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings, Social Problems Theory Division Members!

The 2016 SSSP meeting in Seattle is fast approaching! This newsletter includes news and information to get you ready for the meeting. You'll find announcements about the Division's Outstanding Student Paper & Outstanding Book Awards, a session schedule, and information about our divisional meeting.

I'm also pleased to introduce the Division's Incoming Chair — Dave Lane (University of South Dakota). Dave has been an active, committed member of the Theory Division for several years now, regularly organizing sessions and serving as chair of our Outstanding Book Award Committee this year and our Outstanding Article Award Committee last year. Dave's research and teaching are in the areas of social problems, deviant behavior, social psychology, and collective behavior. He is currently conducting an ethnographic study of tattoo workers in Baltimore, Maryland. I'm looking forward to working with Dave at this year's annual meeting, and I believe the Division is in good hands with Dave as our Chair. Should you like to reach out to him, you can do so at Dave.Lane@usd.edu.

Jared Del Rosso
University of Denver
Social Problems Theory Division Chair (2014-2016)

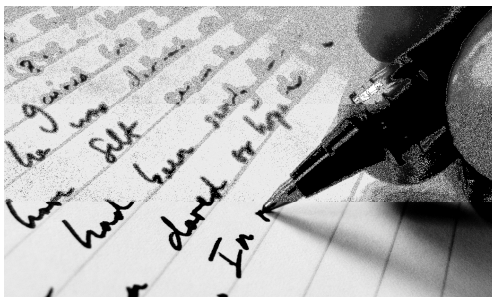
THEORY DIVISION CHAIR
2014 - 2016

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CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER

The Social Problems Theory Division is always looking for content to feature in the newsletter. If you have ideas for a brief essay or commentary that you would like to contribute, announcements about new publications that you would like to share with the division, a call for papers, or if you are working with a student whose research you think should be highlighted here, let me know by emailing me at jared.delrosso@du.edu.



2016 OUTSTANDING STUDENT PAPER AWARD

This year's recipient of the Social Problems Theory's Outstanding Student Paper Award is **Michael Halpin** (University of Wisconsin—Madison). Halpin's manuscript "**Science and Sociodicy: Neuroscientific Explanations of Social Problems**" impressed the award committee (Joel Best, Brian Monahan, and Jared Del Rosso) for its critical evaluation of neuroscientific evidence and claims about problems. Halpin shows how these claims obscure the social factors implicated in collective problems. He will be presenting this work at the Division's session "New Work in Social Problems Theory I" on Friday, August 19 (8:30 AM).



ABOUT MICHAEL HALPIN

Michael Halpin is a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. His work engages with the sociology of mental health, medical sociology and social psychology. Specifically, Halpin's dissertation investigates how neuroscientific perspectives impact the mental health disciplines in relation to the conceptualization of disorders, analysis of data, and selection of treatments. His dissertation draws on 78 interviews with mental health professionals and researchers (e.g., psychiatrists, neuroscientists) and fourteen months of ethnographic observation at a leading neuropsychiatric laboratory. Halpin's latest article, "The DSM and Professional Practice: Research, clinical and institutional perspectives," received an SSSP student paper award and has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. His work has also appeared in *Social Science & Medicine*, *Sociology of Health & Illness* and *Culture*, and *Health and Sexuality*.

2016 OUTSTANDING STUDENT PAPER— HONORABLE MENTION

The Division's Outstanding Student Paper Award Committee recognized an Honorable Mention paper this year. We do this infrequently, when we are fortunate enough to have two exceptional papers that address themes and issues that resonate with the Division's mission.

The Committee awarded Honorable Mention to **Nate Ela** (University of Wisconsin—Madison) for his manuscript, "**Reclaiming the Commons, Activating Space: A Dual Genealogy**." The manuscript addresses historical constructions of the notion of "the commons" in order to understand its contemporary meaning. Ela will present this paper in the Division's "Critical Theories of Social Problems" session on Saturday, August 20 (8:30 AM).

ABOUT NATE ELA

In his dissertation, Nate Ela is developing a theory of use-based welfare. Ela conceptualizes this as a mode of redistribution that grants beneficiaries the right to use and benefit from, but not own, a resource such as land. Rather than redistributing via tax and transfer, use-based welfare does so by adjusting the rules, norms, and forms of property law. This is not a new form of social policy, as is revealed by a conceptual genealogy of how, between the 1600s and the late 1800s, social thinkers and reformers imagined projects to reclaim the commons. More recently, used-based welfare has shaped the landscapes of American cities. To explain how and why it has periodically emerged and disappeared as an urban institution, Ela develops a comparative-historical and ethnographic case study of the varied ways in which social reformers, firms, and public officials in Chicago have made land available for urban food production, from the 1890s to the present. His work on these issues is forthcoming in *Law and Social Inquiry* and *Fordham Urban Law Journal*.





2016 OUTSTANDING BOOK AWARD

Each year, the Social Problems Theory Division recognizes an outstanding piece of scholarship on the social construction of social problems. In odd-numbered years, we give this award to published articles; in even-numbered years, we recognize an outstanding book. The 2016 Outstanding Book Award Committee consisted of Dave Lane, who chaired the committee, Mathieu Deflem, and André O. Meeks.

The committee selected two books to be recognized as co-winners of this year's Outstanding Book Award: **Kitty Calavita and Valerie Jenness's *Appealing to Justice: Prisoner Grievances, Rights, and Carceral Logic*** (University of California Press, 2014) and **Joachim J. Savelsberg's *Representing Mass Violence: Conflicting Responses to Human Rights Violations in Darfur*** (University of California Press, 2015).

STATEMENT OF THE OUTSTANDING BOOK AWARD COMMITTEE

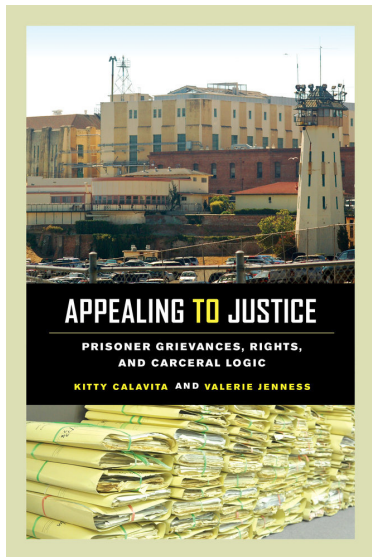
"We believe that Kitty Calavita and Valerie Jenness' work *Appealing to Justice* provides a unique analysis of social problems policy, its implementation, and how actors attempt to navigate these solutions. The text provides an interesting frame for investigating the inherent contradictions of seeking protection of rights from an institution that unequivocally exists to confine, restrict, and deny liberty. The book moves beyond policy making to examine the implementation of policy and how people attempt to manage the inherent contradictions of those policies in a total institution.

Joachim J. Savelsberg's *Representing Mass Violence* demonstrates a superior execution and application of theory. Savelsberg addresses several theoretical aspects in studying the issue of how mass violence is responded to in multiple, competing fields. The book's important contribution lies in revealing how social problems constructions and frames for action are produced and distributed in a global context."

More information about the book award winners can be found on pages four and five of the newsletter.



2016 OUSTANDING BOOK AWARD WINNERS



2014

University of California Press

264 pp.

ISBN: 9780520284180

Appealing to Justice

PRISONER GRIEVANCES, RIGHTS, AND CARCERAL LOGIC

KITTY CALAVITA & VALERIE JENNESS

Having gained unique access to California prisoners and corrections officials and to thousands of prisoners' written grievances and institutional responses, Kitty Calavita and Valerie Jenness take us inside one of the most significant, yet largely invisible, institutions in the United States. Drawing on sometimes startlingly candid interviews with prisoners and prison staff, as well as on official records, the authors walk us through the byzantine grievance process, which begins with prisoners filing claims and ends after four levels of review, with corrections officials usually denying requests for remedies. *Appealing to Justice* is both an unprecedented study of disputing in an extremely asymmetrical setting and a rare glimpse of daily life inside this most closed of institutions. Quoting extensively from their interviews with prisoners and officials, the authors give voice to those who are almost never heard from. These voices unsettle conventional wisdoms within the sociological literature—for example, about the reluctance of vulnerable and/or stigmatized populations to name injuries and file claims, and about the relentlessly adversarial subjectivities of prisoners and correctional officials—and they do so with striking poignancy. Ultimately, *Appealing to Justice* reveals a system fraught with impediments and dilemmas, which delivers neither justice, nor efficiency, nor constitutional conditions of confinement.

Kitty Calavita is Professor Emerita of Criminology, Law and Society and of Sociology at UC Irvine. Her books include *Invitation to Law and Society*; *Immigrants at the Margins*; *Big Money Crime*; and *Inside the State*.

Valerie Jenness is Professor of Criminology, Law and Society and of Sociology at UC Irvine, where she is also Dean of the School of Social Ecology. Her books include *Making Hate a Crime*; *Hate Crimes*; *Making It Work*; and *Routing the Opposition*.

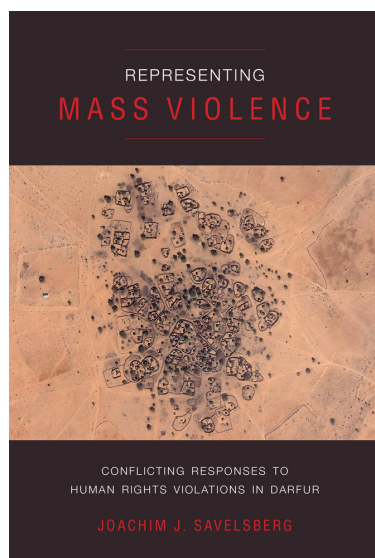
"The authors bring wide-ranging scholarship to bear on the contradictions between the logic of rights and of carceral control. . . . There are no simple truths in this exceptional work of scholarship, which is important for criminology, sociology, law, and political science."—P. S. Leighton *CHOICE*

"*Appealing to Justice* provides a powerful and disturbing window into the deprivations of contemporary punishment and a brilliant theoretical argument about the role of law inside of prisons."—*Punishment & Society*

"A valuable contribution to our knowledge of the prisoner society, conditions of confinement and operational realities in the California prison system... [a] highly original book."—*British Journal of Criminology*

"A beautifully written, compelling, and heartbreaking account of the promise and failure of the rule of law; there is no one better able to tell the story of these prisoners."—Susan S. Silbey, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2016 OUSTANDING BOOK AWARD WINNERS



Representing Mass Violence

CONFLICTING RESPONSES TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN DARFUR

JOACHIM J. SAVELSBERG

How do interventions by the UN Security Council and the International Criminal Court influence representations of mass violence? What images arise instead from the humanitarianism and diplomacy fields? How are these competing perspectives communicated to the public via mass media? Zooming in on the case of Darfur, Joachim J. Savelsberg analyzes more than three thousand news reports and opinion pieces and interviews leading newspaper correspondents, NGO experts, and foreign ministry officials from eight countries to show the dramatic differences in the framing of mass violence around the world and across social fields. *Representing Mass Violence* contributes to our understanding of how the world acknowledges and responds to violence in the Global South.

2015
University of California Press
363 pp.
ISBN: 9780520281509

A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's new open access publishing program for monographs.

Visit www.luminosoa.org to learn more.

Joachim J. Savelsberg is Professor of Sociology and Law and Arsham and Charlotte O'hannessian Chair at the University of Minnesota. He is the coauthor of *American Memories: Atrocities and the Law* and author of *Crime and Human Rights: Criminology of Genocide and Atrocities*.

"This book is a pathbreaking examination of the multiple international narratives around Darfur by human rights advocates, humanitarians, journalists, and diplomats. It is thorough and rigorous—an essential contribution to the scholarship."—Alex de Waal, Executive Director, World Peace Foundation at the Fletcher School, Tufts University

"Darfur is the modern genocide that refuses to end, and this volume gives this mass atrocity the attention it deserves. It does so in highly original ways, including an unprecedented global analysis of media coverage, activism, and advocacy. The author's familiarity with European and North American settings gives him a unique perspective from which to undertake this massive study."—John Hagan, John D. MacArthur Professor of Sociology and Law at Northwestern University and Co-Director of the Center on Law and Globalization at the American Bar Foundation in Chicago

"Joachim Savelsberg's use of secondary material and his engagement with the critics of the human rights regime in general and those who have studied Sudan in particular, coupled with his primary analysis of media representations and their national variations (and similarities), provides a perspective that is more encompassing than anything I am aware of."—Daniel Levy, Professor of Sociology at Stony Brook University

"A comprehensive survey of the range of knowledge forms and institutionalized interests that have contributed to the construction of Darfur as a signification of humanitarian crisis, human rights violation, and contemporary genocide."—Dylan Rodríguez, Professor and Chair, Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California Riverside



MEMBER PUBLICATIONS



Available July 2016
W.W. Norton

Joel Best is Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware and author of *Damned Lies and Statistics*, *Stat-Spotting*, and *Everyone's a Winner*.

Social Problems

THIRD EDITION

JOEL BEST

Updated with more than 50 new case studies and examples, *Social Problems* elucidates the complex, competitive process through which social problems emerge, paying particular attention to how resources and rhetoric affect each stage of the process. Taking students through the natural history of a social problem, Joel Best shows how activists, experts, and their opponents engage in claimsmaking, and how the media then report on these claims, prompting public reaction and driving policy. In order to help students connect theory to everyday life, Best fills the book with colorful examples and real-world case studies.

"This book is powerful, provocative, and ultimately, empowering."

—David S. Meyer, University of California, Irvine

"Finally, a textbook on social problems that is genuinely sociological. Joel Best has given us a wise book that is clearly and temperately written, tightly organized, and wonderfully illustrated with a wide range of contemporary examples."

—Joseph E. Davis, University of Virginia

"This is one of the best texts that I have ever used. . . . The greatest strength of this text is in rationally educating the reader about the subjective, messy nature of social problems and the imperfect process of social change and legislation."

—Joshua Kreger, Lehigh Carbon Community College



2016 ANNUAL MEETING PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

August 19-21, 2016
Westin Seattle Hotel
Seattle, WA

DIVISIONAL MEETING & SESSIONS

SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY DIVISION MEETING

Friday, August 19, 12:30 PM - 2:10 PM, Cascade II

Please join Dave Lane, the incoming Division Chair, and me at the Social Problems Theory divisional meeting to plan for next year's conference in Montreal, develop committees for our student paper and published article awards, and discuss other Division business. New members and student members are especially encouraged to attend! If you're new to the Division or simply looking for a way to get more involved with it or the SSSP, our division meeting is the way to do so!

SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY DIVISION SOLE & CO-SPONSORED SESSIONS

SESSION 6: NEW WORK IN SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY I

Friday, August 19, 8:30 AM - 10:10 AM, Olympic

SESSION 18: NEW WORK IN SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY II

Friday, August 19, 10:30 AM - 12:10 PM, Olympic

SESSION 45: GLOBALIZING SOCIAL PROBLEMS THEORY

Friday, August 19, 2:30 PM - 4:10 PM, Pine

SESSION 54: GENDER, GLOBALIZATION, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Friday, August 19, 4:30 PM - 6:10 PM, Mercer

SESSION 68: Institutional Junctures and their 21st century consequences

Saturday, August 20, 8:30 AM - 10:10 AM, Pine

SESSION 75: Critical Theories of Social Problems

Saturday, August 20, 10:30 AM - 12:10 PM, Cascade I-C

SESSION 85: Publishing Qualitative & Theoretical Work

Saturday, August 20, 12:30 PM - 2:10 PM, Cascade I-A

SESSION 101: Problematizing Bodies

Saturday, August 20, 2:30 PM - 4:10 PM, Cascade I-C

SESSION 163: Policing and Social Control in a Global Context

Sunday, August 21, 2:30 PM - 4:10 PM, Pine

CREDITS

PHOTOGRAPH OF “WRITING” (P. 1, CROPPED FROM ORIGINAL)

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GRAPHIC — 2016 SSSP ANNUAL MEETING PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Pam Kachel, Mariner Art and Design

Layout of Book Announcements (P. 4-5)

Based on Temple University Press’s flier for *Contemporary Social Constructionism*