

Spring 2016

The Badass Sociologist

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Teaching Social Problems Division Newsletter

A NOTE FROM THE DIVISION CHAIR

HEPHZIBAH V. STRMIC-PAWL

Dear TSPers,

This spring semester has flown by, but I also presume that many of us are ready to welcome summer! This newsletter is the last one that I will contribute to as Chair of this division. It's been an honor to communicate with you all in such a special way; I've truly enjoyed learning about all that our members do and your dedication to teaching, learning, and students. We are truly some bad-ass sociologists! Though this is my last newsletter, I intend to remain an active member of this division and hope to see all of you at many many more meetings.

This newsletter has some wonderful contributions. First off, be sure to check deadlines in relationship to the upcoming SSSP annual meeting. Then check out member publications by

Kathleen Korgen, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Mindy Stomblor and Amanda Jungels. We have a special feature with Jungels and Stomblor who are interviewed by PhD candidate Echols on their new social problems reader, *Focus on Social Problems*. This is a great piece, and I hope members in the future will submit interviews about their publications. We also have a thought provoking piece by Jerry Krase on immigration and the possibilities of true incorporation into America. And, don't forget to look at our member announcements at the end, including Corey Dolgon's amazing lecture series and the Association for Humanist Sociology annual meeting call. Always feel free to send me any suggestions, comments, or questions.

In solidarity, hephzibah

hvsp@mville.edu

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IMPORTANT DATES

MAY 16

Preliminary program available

JULY 15

Online registration ends

AUGUST 19-21

SSSP Annual Meeting

SSSP 2016 NEWS



Registration for the 2016 Annual Meeting available early April,
pre-registration ends July 15

The 66th Annual Meeting will take place from August 19-21 at the Westin Seattle Hotel, Seattle, WA. An e-mail announcement for pre-registration is coming soon!

Make your hotel reservation at the Westin Seattle Hotel, cut-off date: July 26

Our single/double room rate of \$195 includes complimentary internet in your guest room. To make a reservation, please click on the booking link to be directed to the hotel's reservation page: www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/SSSP2016SEA or call central reservations at: [1-888-627-8513](tel:1-888-627-8513). Please ask for the Society for the Study of Social Problems group rate when booking a room reservation to ensure the correct discounted group rate is given (based on availability)

Call for Nominations for the SSSP 2017 General Election, due June 15

Nominations are open for candidates to run in the SSSP 2017 General Election. For more information, visit:

http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/656/2017_General_Election_Candidate_Nominations/.

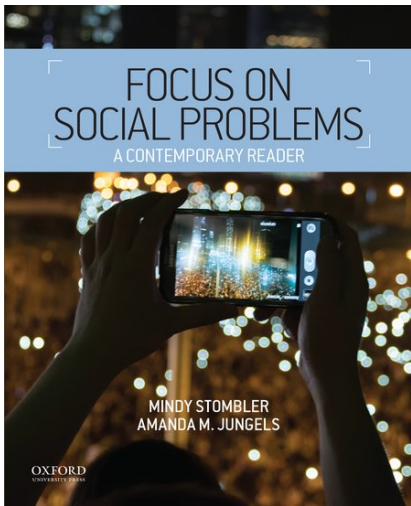
Sign-up for the 2016 Meeting Mentor Program, deadline June 30

The **Meeting Mentor Program** is designed to facilitate interaction between new members or graduate students and meeting veterans at the Annual Meeting. Mentors provide valuable knowledge about the SSSP and Annual Meeting activities as well as insight into their own experiences as scholar activists. To apply as either a mentee or mentor, visit:

http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/312/Mentoring_Program/.

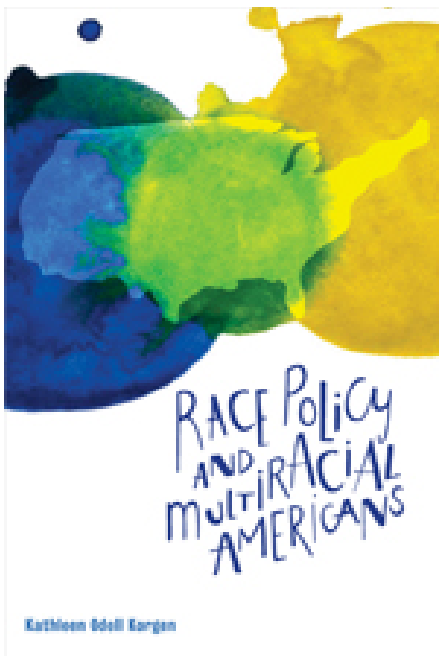
SSSP MEMBER PUBLICATIONS

MINDY STOMBLER AND AMANDA JUNGELS



Stombler and Jungels teamed up to publish *Focus on Social Problems: A contemporary reader* with Oxford University Press. *Focus on Social Problems* is a comprehensive reader that exposes students to current issues related to Social Problems. The appropriately-leveled selections in the reader help students understand how social problems are defined and constructed, increase their empirical knowledge about the causes and consequences of social problems, and develop empathy. Working from a critical social constructionist foundation, the readings address a wide variety of social problems. Editors Stombler and Jungels include a combination of research-based articles, sociologically informed popular media pieces, and reports from non-profits like Pew. Each chapter opens with an interview of a social-change activist doing work related to the chapter's featured social problem, giving students an opportunity to envision themselves as agents of social change.

KATHLEEN KORGAN



This is the first book to offer a closer look at the effects of multiracial citizens on race-related policies. As the number of people who identify as multiracial is growing rapidly, policies that relate to race continue to lag behind, failing to properly account for the ways that a multiracial citizenry complicates programs aimed at mitigating the effects of racism, ameliorating past discrimination, and more. The book takes up key questions relating to the intersection of race-based policies, social welfare, education, and multiracial citizens, while drawing on tools and techniques from a range of fields to present a picture of where we're at today and what possible steps are needed to create more effective and more inclusive policies in the future. It will be essential reading for students and scholars in sociology, political science, public policy, and other fields dealing with race relations and social justice.

This book also features a co-authored chapter by TSP member, [Hephzibah Strmic-Pawl](#)

AN INTERVIEW WITH MINDY STOMBLER AND AMANDA JUNGELS ABOUT THEIR NEW SOCIAL PROBLEMS READER

Focus on Social Problems

INTERVIEWED BY ERIN ECHOLS, PHD CANDIDATE IN SOCIOLOGY AT GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND AUTHOR OF THE INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL FOR THE BOOK

Erin Echols: What motivated you to create a new reader for Social Problems courses?

Mindy Stombler: We both prefer to use readers to teach our courses and we had moved away from the current offerings on the market to making our own

"JOURNALISTS AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS HAVE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS AS WELL"

"course packs." We have both taught social problems courses for many years, at

institutions with very diverse student bodies, and we wanted an anthology that would work well for our students--one that had an in-depth selection of curated pieces that could work *whether you assigned a textbook or not*. We also both teach our classes from a social constructionist and critical perspective, and we felt that those perspectives weren't as well represented among the available books (or if they were, we found the books were not quite comprehensive enough for our purposes). When Oxford University Press approached me about the possibility of editing a social problems reader, I was very excited about the opportunity. I had successfully co-authored *Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader* (W.W. Norton) and had experience with the process of creating

a broad anthology. Amanda and I had worked together for a number of years, so the collaboration was a fitting one.

Erin Echols: What were your goals for the book when you were planning it?

Mindy Stombler: First and foremost, we wanted the book to be accessible to introductory-level students who may not have taken any other sociology courses, may not have experience reading scholarly journal articles, or whose sociological imagination is not yet developed. We wanted the material to be relatable and in language they could understand. Accessibility also meant controlling the cost of the book, and we are very proud that we produced a book that is relatively affordable (Oxford

University Press is a not-for-profit press)! We wanted to choose our sources and articles from a broad range of sources, but to ensure that they were empirically-based and sociologically sound. While academic research on social problems is important and contributes a great deal to our knowledge about social problems (and we include many academic pieces), journalists and non-profit organizations have valuable contributions as well. And, because they don't face the constraints of academic publishing, news articles, narrative pieces, sociological blog posts, and investigative journalism often had more timely research and data than articles in academic journals. Finally, we wanted to choose readings that helped to develop empathy among readers. Including activist interviews, as well as readings that we felt develop compassion and understanding, helped us to accomplish that goal.

Erin Echols: The activist interviews that you included are a unique feature. Can you talk more about why you

decided to include those at the opening of every chapter?

Amanda M. Jungels: One of the major complaints we fielded from students—and from graduate students teaching social problems—was that social problems classes are, frankly, depressing. You discuss problem after problem, many of them cumulative in the disadvantages they produce, and few textbooks and readers cover the topic of social change. Students frequently told that as they learned about these problems, they even wanted to be an agent of social change in their communities, but didn't know how--or if--one person could even make a difference. So, when we were designing the book, it was important to us to include the voices of those who are out there on a daily basis, working for social change on a variety of issues. We selected activities to cover every chapter of the book, and our activists range from those working with large national organizations to small,

grass-roots ones, and represent a diverse group of Americans.

Erin Echols: Did you have any particular challenges while working on the book?

Amanda M. Jungels: Oh, there were a lot of challenges! First and probably the greatest: There are innumerable social problems, and despite the breadth in this anthology, we couldn't possibly cover them all! Simply narrowing down the topics, and then finding articles on that topic that might be suitable for inclusion in the book, was a major challenge. We read hundreds of articles on dozens of subjects, sometimes choosing a piece, editing it, and then deciding that it didn't fit with the other selections in the chapter and that it had to be

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replaced. Or, we would decide on a piece, and then new research or a new report would come out, and we would have to re-evaluate. It is also challenging finding properly leveled articles. At times we had to recruit academics to write accessible pieces for the book. In the midst of all this, I finished my dissertation, graduated, and moved from Atlanta to Baltimore for a postdoctoral research position with the U.S. Army! So, much of our work was completed electronically over file-sharing websites and email, and then over several trips to Atlanta to compile the final book. And, of course, the book was completed while we were both working full-time in research and teaching jobs, while managing familial and other obligations. It was no easy feat, but we are extremely proud of the final product. And we have great respect for our colleagues who have authored or edited Social Problems texts and anthologies!

Erin Echols: Was there anything that you learned

while working on the book that surprised you? I know when I read it, I learned a lot of new information. Were you surprised by anything you learned?

Amanda M. Jungels: For me, I think this book has really re-iterated the interconnectedness of social problems, and how their effects can be cumulative. This was something I knew and had taught my students, but I now have a fuller appreciation for that aspect of social problems. I also learned a lot about the various social problems that we cover in the book, including ones that I had never had the opportunity to teach in my classes, like issues related to food safety and the food production system. It really changed the way I think about the food we consume—how it is produced, who is involved in its production, and the impact that it has on our health.

Mindy Stomblor: I was most surprised by how difficult it is to get in touch with and get completed interviews

and photographs (headshots) from a wide range of activists! I always think of my academic colleagues as some of the “busiest,” but these activists were shouldering major burdens. The work they were doing to change policy and engage the citizenry was truly inspiring. As much as I love the articles we chose, the activist interviews are my favorite part of the book.

Mindy Stomblor is a Senior Lecturer and Director of Instruction in the Department of Sociology at Georgia State University. She is a co-editor of *Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader* 4e, and a recipient of the Southern Sociological Society's Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award.

Amanda M. Jungels is an ORISE Fellow studying social and behavioral health among U.S. Army soldiers. She is a past recipient of the Jacqueline Boles Teaching Fellowship and Teaching Associate Award at Georgia State University.

ELLIS ISLAND IS NOT AN ANSWER TO EUROPE'S IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS

**JERRY KRASE, EMERITUS
AND MURRAY KOPPELMAN
PROFESSOR, BROOKLYN
COLLEGE**

I agree that
Europe's
chaotic

immigration policy and immigrants themselves would greatly benefit by transforming Lampadusa, Sicily (a few miles off the coast of Libya) into a modern version of Ellis Island. However, I have some major cautions as well. America's immigration policy has never been an instance of "social engineering." That would be too kind a judgment. As is true of the current EU policies, it was an attempt to manage the human deluge of 1880-1920, and to filter out those who might ideologically, culturally, and genetically threaten the nation. During its busiest years Ellis Island processed one million every year. The United Nations estimates about the same number are loudly knocking on Europe's door today. Rather than being a welcome mat, Ellis Island was a late Victorian scientific sorting machine. The only invitations the lowly steerage passengers received were from labor contractors and, if lucky, friends and relatives here who swore they would take care of them through the guaranteed bad times. America was on the verge of greatness and Big Business and Industry needed a huge labor pool in order to grow and prosper. It was that demand that trumped Nativist xenophobia and the antagonism of a nascent, increasingly militant organized labor movement. As was true of four miserable centuries of African slave trade, it

was the work and not the worker that was welcomed to the shores. The poet in me likes to think of these competing sentiments as variations on the theme of Emma Lazarus' 1883 sonnet "New Colossus."

*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I need cheap labor to lower wages,
inside the Golden Door!"*

The success of the American "Melting Pot" has less to do with good intentions than with accidentally good outcomes. Rather than being the last stop on a long journey, arrival in New York Harbor was the first step on an even longer one. Twelve million bodies passed through the Ellis Island portal on their way to elsewhere. Some had no idea what lay before them but, like the shores of Lampadusa, "here" was better than "there." I have written in several places about the Coney Island Avenue Bus I often take to Brooklyn College. In a *Voice of American* Program I called it a "Magical Bus."

**"IT WAS THE WORK AND
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(<http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-2004-11-23-voa38/396916.html>) It begins its journey in an almost totally white upper middle class neighborhood and, most of the time, slowly moves through Afro-American, Caribbean, Mexican, Pakistani, Orthodox Jewish, and Chinese enclaves, ending in a Russian/Ukrainian section called "Little Odessa." As these mostly "New American" passengers embark and disembark along the route -- Blacks and Whites, Latinos and Anglos, Jews and Muslims -- they seldom cross ethnic lines with words or signs of mutual recognition. Frankly speaking, I don't think they like each other very much. American society is like this bus. From the last Great Immigration Wave that crashed upon Ellis Island to the present ebbs and flows, America has worked despite its unnatural diversity because it has unconsciously been structured in such a way that for immigrants to get what they want -- prosperity, education, a decent place to live, safety and security -- they must cooperate with people with whom they are different; especially with people you don't like and who return the favor. If there is a conflict between passengers on that magical bus and people don't cooperate they're not going to get where they want to go. Europeans think America's "Melting Pot" works by eliminating differences. On the contrary, America's immigrants learn that even though they may not be welcome, they can learn how to get to their destination without discarding the baggage they brought from home. For many years I have served as a resource for the U.S. State Department's International Visitors Program. I have often given tours of Brooklyn neighborhoods that display the marvels of American diversity and, not incidentally, tolerance and cooperation among ethnic groups that could be a model for

Europe. On one occasion I took a group of junior diplomats from emerging Eastern and Central European democracies (Georgia, Romania, and Ukraine if I remember correctly) for a ride on the "Magical Bus." The ethnic kaleidoscope stunned them. To find out the stop to transfer for their return to Manhattan I asked a female passenger. She didn't speak English but I recognized her Russian response. My guests all spoke Russian so one went over to get directions from her. Upon returned he admitted he was puzzled. "She speaks no English, but she told me she was an "American."

As everyone knows, Brooklyn is not America where more than a third of its two and a half million residents are foreign-born. In comparison, foreign-born residents make up about an eighth of the total USA population. Also, although "minorities" comprise more than one-third of the nation they were not evenly distributed, but concentrate along its edges. Hispanics are the largest group, with 46 million persons (15% of the population). Blacks are second, with 41 million (13.5 %), followed fast-growing Asians, at 15.2 million (5%). The US Census Bureau has predicted that by 2042, more than half of the population will be minorities, with much due to immigration. Some take this as a warning.

Today it is Latinos and Muslims rather than Italians and Jews who receive the most unwanted attention. Although not yet as menacing as France's National Front, Germany's PERGIDA, or Italy's Northern League, "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean" has its own ugly array of white supremacists and antigovernment agitators. Right-wing Presidential candidates call for building high walls patrolled by armed guards to keep out Latinos, and deporting

hundreds of thousands of those who have contributed mightily to our economy. One of them, Donald Trump, calls for banning Muslims from entering America through any portal.

Pew Research Center polls show that 46 % of Americans believe "Islam is more likely than other faiths to encourage violence against nonbelievers." The son of America's Evangelical icon, Billy Graham, tells his flock that it is a "religion of hatred" and "war." As to comparative bigotry, the 2014 Pew Global Attitudes Survey found 27 % of Frenchmen, 33 % of Germans, and 63 % of Italians have

unfavorable feelings towards Muslims. It seems obvious to me that for immigrants on both sides of the Atlantic that there is a big difference between getting through the "Golden Door" and being inside the house. Despite, or perhaps because, of its historic diversity America remains benevolently intolerant.

Note: Versions of this essay have been published in *I-ItalyNY Magazine*, *I-Italy.org*, and *The Independent*. This and other essays can be found on my blog "Traces" at <http://www.iitaly.org/bloggers/traces>.

AND A SHOUT OUT!

CHECK OUT TSP Member and Association for Humanist Sociology President, Kathleen Fitzgerald's Presidential Address!

Fitzgerald, Kathleen J. 2016. "2015 Presidential Address: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Locavorism and Humanist Sociology." *Humanity and Society* 39(1):1-22.

SEE YOU IN SEATTLE!

In Search of One Big Union: Folksongs and the U.S. Labor Movement

A Singing Lecture by Corey Dolgon Folksinger and Sociologist

Corey Dolgon, a Ph.D in American Culture and Sociology Professor has been performing "singing lectures" for almost two decades. Focusing on the role that folksongs play in the U.S. labor movement, Corey's words and music bring both history and theory to life. He is a long-time labor activist and community organizer and has used folk songs to build solidarity on the line and engage students in the classroom. This singing lecture covers labor history from a multicultural perspective and examines the function of folk songs in workers' lives, labor, and organizing. The lecture can be tailored for specific needs and time periods, but generally runs about an hour to an hour and a half depending on format. Corey is very adept at gaining audience participation and provides an object lesson in how the collective acts of singing can enhance the feelings of solidarity and create new possibilities for collective identities.



Here's what students, faculty and labor folk have to say about Corey's performances:

"I learned about the importance and power of strikes and labor unions. He made the period come alive."
-student, Stonehill College

"Corey's work weaves together a coherent and accessible narrative about labor struggles with a tour de force of labor songs that move an audience with workers' own articulate descriptions of their conditions and inspiring visions of movements to improve those conditions."
-Chris Dale, Professor of Sociology, New England College

"Corey's music added tremendous spirit to our National Labor Assembly. Hearing and singing labor songs gave our nurses a sense of community with others in the union movement and helped build energy at our meetings. I encourage other unions to add Corey's talents and expertise to their agendas."
-Cheryl Johnson, President, United American Nurses, AFL-CIO

"Well grounded in academic literature and the multicultural American songbook. Imagine an event that attracts from every campus demographic: international students, faculty, staff, undergraduates, emeriti faculty, and community activists, and has them all standing together enthusiastically singing songs about solidarity. We have never had an event like this! I have already had requests to bring Professor Dolgon back!"
-Melinda Jo Messineo, Sociology Dept. Chair, Ball State University

Corey Dolgon's "singing lecture" is a hit. Those who attended his presentation for the University of Louisville Labor-Management Center from union retirees to active union member to academics and management were entertained and enlightened. A good time and good learning.
-John Ralston, Asst. Director, University of Louisville Labor-Mgt Center

Corey's wonderful voice, abundant energy, and great knowledge about folksongs, the labor movement, and other social movements were entertaining, very informative, and inspiring. He made a major impact on WPUNJ, performing in front of almost 300 students and faculty.
-Kathleen Odell Korgen, Sociology Professor, William Patterson University

Please contact Corey for scheduling or more information at 617-298-0388 or at cdolgon@stonehill.edu



The Association for
Humanist Sociology
(AHS)
2016 Annual Meetings
Call for Participation

DENVER, COLORADO
November 2-6, 2016

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
Denver Tech Center

Elevating Humanity: Pathways to Progressivism

A more progressive society: what would it look like and how do we get there from here? What are the obstacles and impediments and how can they be overcome? Unlike hikers preparing to ascend a Rocky Mountain peak, we cannot rely on a trail map to rise above the treacherous social terrain of inequality, injustice, and oppression. Alternatively, we must collaborate, share our knowledge and experiences, and inspire each other to learn and do more. Join us in Denver, Colorado as we discuss and propose solutions to pressing social problems such as economic inequality, environmental crises, racism, xenophobia, and heterosexism, to name a few. We welcome proposals for sessions and paper presentations that enhance understanding of problems, while focusing on strategies, movements, organizations, and actions that "blaze trails" to humanistic solutions and progressive change.

Submit abstracts for papers or sessions related to the conference theme or the AHS mission of equality and social justice to:

www.humanist-sociology.org
Submission Deadline: June 15, 2016



The 2016 Annual Meetings of the Association for Humanist Sociology

Elevating Humanity: Pathways to Progressivism

Denver, Colorado

November 2-6, 2016

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Denver Tech Center

Conference Theme and Call for Participation

A more progressive society: what would it look like and how do we get there from here? What are the obstacles and impediments and how can they be overcome? As there are often many paths to the top of a mountain, so too are there many ways to achieve a more humanistic world. However, unlike hikers preparing to ascend a Colorado peak, we cannot depend on a trail map to rise above the rugged and contested terrain of inequality and injustice. Instead, we must collaborate, share our knowledge and experiences, and inspire each other to learn and do more.

In support of this effort, the Association of Humanist Sociology (AHS) invites you to organize a session or submit an abstract for a paper presentation. We welcome proposals that enhance understanding of social issues and problems, but with focus or emphasis upon alternative strategies, movements, organizations, and collective efforts that strive to bring about humanistic solutions and progressive change.

The Denver area offers not only breath-taking views of the Rocky Mountains, but is an ideal location in which to gather and confront pressing and timely social issues. Many of these issues pose serious problems for Denver and the state of Colorado as well as all of humanity. These include income and wealth polarization, environmental crises, racism, xenophobia, heterosexism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and a biased criminal justice system, to name merely a few.

However, we should be encouraged by the fact that Denver has received much attention in recent years, less for its problems, and more for its ability and willingness to confront them, even amidst significant opposition. Politically active and organized residents in Denver and across the state of Colorado have achieved victories in political battles that would have seemed unlikely or even impossible to win, as evidenced, for example, by the state's legalization of medical and recreational marijuana.

This energy has not been confined to Colorado. For instance, growth and momentum has recently occurred in the Black Lives Matter, women's rights, and gay rights movements in the United States. Globally, organizations and activists are gaining ground solving a wide range of problems and nations are uniting to address increasingly urgent threats to our planet, such as climate change and nuclear arms proliferation.

Please join us in the "Mile High City" as we discuss successes and challenges and as we aspire to "blaze new trails" leading to peace, justice, equality, and greater life chances for all.

Paper and Presentation Formats

The Association for Humanist Sociology is a community of sociologists, educators, scholars, and activists who share a commitment to using sociology to promote peace, equality, and social justice. Remaining true to the mission of AHS, we seek papers about any social issue that impedes progress toward a more peaceful and socially just world. However, we especially encourage the presentation of papers that describe, explain, or propose solutions to problems. Examples of topics include, but need not be limited to, descriptions of progress made by global political movements, examples of successful action within states or communities, alternative forms or models of social/economic/cultural organization, and descriptions of service learning or other transformative pedagogies used in teaching and learning.

We encourage the following types of submissions for sessions and presentations:

- Paper presentations (15-20 minute presentations, 3-4 speakers per session)
- Critical dialogues (5-8 minute presentations, 4-8 panelists per session)
- Panel sessions and Author-Meets-Critics sessions (3-4 panelists per session)
- Workshops and Film Screenings
- Poster presentations

Please visit the Association for Humanist Sociology Website to propose sessions and complete abstracts for papers or sessions related to the conference theme or to the AHS mission of equality and social justice: www.humanist-sociology.org.

Advertising in the Conference Program

We are accepting advertisements to be included in our 2016 conference program. If you wish to advertise your new book, an upcoming conference, or your graduate program, please contact AHSDenver2016@gmail.com. Half-page ads are \$75.00 and full-page ads, \$150.00 (in black and white).

Conference Location

The Doubletree by Hilton Hotel and the Denver Tech Center area boasts outstanding views of the front range of the Rocky Mountains, including Pike's Peak (south), Mount Evans (west) and Long's Peak (north). In proximity to the hotel are the "Village Shops at Landmark," with several nightclubs, restaurants, movie theatres, and other shopping and entertainment attractions.

Light rail transportation provides access from the hotel to many interesting stops, including Union Station in the lower downtown Denver area. From Union Station, walk or use free bus service to explore the 16th Street (pedestrian) Mall area, with its countless stores, restaurants, coffee houses, brewpubs, museums, and many other attractions. A new light rail line to and from the hotel and Denver International Airport is scheduled for completion in time to be used by conference attendees.

Questions, Conference Updates, and Further Information

- Questions? Please e-mail Bhoomi K. Thakore, Program Chair or Chuck Koeber, President at ahsdenver2016@gmail.com
- Check the AHS website: www.humanist-sociology.org
- Follow AHS on Twitter: [#AHSDenver2016](https://twitter.com/AHSDenver2016)
- Like AHS on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HumanistSociology/>
- To learn more about Humanist Sociology, read our journal, *Humanity and Society* <http://has.sagepub.com>.