Dr. Heidi Swarts will be discussing the challenges involved in researching social phenomenon on the local level, and how she found useful insights from both sociology and political science.

Dr. Heidi Swarts received her B.A. from Oberlin College, a Master of Divinity from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University. Currently an independent scholar and consultant, Dr. Swarts has taught at Syracuse University and at Rutgers University – Newark campus. Her academic scholarship and teaching and “real-world” experience mutually inform each other. She is a lifelong Unitarian-Universalist (and since 1999, an ordained minister) whose exposure to religiously-rooted activism inspired her scholarship on religion in American social movements. Her experience as a community organizer in San Francisco’s skid row, the Tenderloin, gave rise to questions about different community organizing models addressed in her research.