

Yale University

Workshop in Urban Ethnography

Spring 2013

Just-in-Time Labor in Philadelphia's Puerto Rican Community: Hypersegregation, Hyperincarceration, Violence, and the Efficiency of Street-Based Drug Markets



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Philippe Bourgois is the Richard Perry University Professor of Anthropology and Family & Community Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. His publications include the award-winning *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* (1995), *Righteous Dopefiend* (with Jeff Schonberg, 2009), and *Violence in War and Peace* (co-edited with Nancy Scheper-Hughes, 2004). He has published over 150 articles on social inequality, concentrated urban poverty, violence, labor migration, ethnic conflict, homelessness, substance abuse, and HIV.

Just-in-Time Labor in Philadelphia's Puerto Rican Community

The loss of local factory jobs and the withdrawal of public resources for inner-city youth due to social welfare and education budget cutbacks propel high school dropouts into the drug economy where they seek survival resources and avenues for social reward. Street-based drug economies in the United States, however, remain as hypersegregated and differentiated as the neighborhoods in which most of them are embedded socially and logistically. Why has much of Philadelphia's Puerto Rican community emerged as the epicenter of an over 1500-square-block open-air street-based drug supermarket that serves primarily white customers? Based on four years of residence in a violently policed Puerto Rican neighborhood in Philadelphia's former industrial factory core, this talk explores how and why Puerto Rican new-immigrants as well as second- and third-generation U.S.-born Puerto Ricans have emerged as a just-in-time, disposable labor force in the global narcotics industry.

Lunch Served *** All Welcome

Monday, April 22, 11:30a-1:20p
210 Prospect Street, Room 203, New Haven

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