

Yale University  
**Workshop in Urban Ethnography**

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*Abstract*

## **School Shootings: Why Bad Things Happen in Perfect Places**

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In recent years, the U.S. has seen a wave of terrible tragedies involving mass shootings in schools. Much of the attention has been focused on individual psychological characteristics of the shooters. Sociological perspectives from ethnographic research point in a very different direction. Organizational secrets, dynamics, adolescent pecking order, and the underside of social capital provide a powerful explanation to the origin of these events. Professor Newman will discuss the contributions of team-based field research for understanding these complex tragedies.