Forrest Stuart
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April 2 @ 3:30pm - Capitol Room - Holmes Student Center

Cosponsored by the Graduate Colloquium Committee and Department of Sociology

Forrest Stuart's research engages a fundamental and pressing concern for both sociological and criminological theory: how authorities attempt to more effectively control marginal social groups, and how those populations counteract and even resist such efforts. This theoretical agenda has resulted in three research projects. The first investigates the role of policing, criminal justice, and social welfare in the lives of marginalized and stigmatized urban communities. The second examines the unexpected resilience of the labor movement in Los Angeles. The third centers more explicitly on theory and methodology, exploring new ways of conceptualizing and studying urban poverty and crime.

Stuart's current book project is an in-depth ethnography of Los Angeles' Skid Row district, an area long regarded as the "homeless capital of America." Beginning in the early 2000s, Skid Row became distinguished as the site of one of the most aggressive broken windows policing campaigns to date, characterized by arguably the largest concentration of standing police forces found anywhere in the United States. Drawing on five years of fieldwork, interviews, and archival research, the project analyzes daily life on Skid Row's streets. Examining the interactions between police officers and the neighborhood's impoverished and homeless inhabitants, Stuart documents the emergence of a new model of urban social control that combines both rehabilitative and punitive interventions, what he terms "therapeutic policing." The project considers how this new configuration of social welfare, urban development, and criminal justice is re-constituting the meanings and contours of poverty, crime, and urban space, as well as the relationship existing between the police and the policed.

http://sociology.uchicago.edu/people/faculty/stuart.shtml