



JOHN JAY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Educating for Justice

The Department of **Sociology**

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FALL 2007 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Professor Robert Garot

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology

**The Criminological Gap: “Lumping It” as
Emotion Work**

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

3:00pm

Sociology Department, Suite 520.14T

Contemporary criminology directs a great deal of attention toward the factors which may lead to crime and violence, but little attention to individuals in circumstances which fit all the necessary conditions, but abstain from criminal or violent acts. This is in marked contrast to the law and society literature, where “lumping it” (Felstiner, 1974) has long been recognized as the overwhelming default response in most disputes. This paper examines this criminological gap between antecedent and outcome, exploring the emotion management techniques of young, inner-city men who respond nonviolently to potentially violent circumstances. Each one, faced with an agonizing loss, is compelled to seek violent retaliation against the antagonist perceived responsible for the loss. Yet each is constrained by their enmeshment in the local social structure and the potential havoc that such violence might bring.

Exploring each consultant’s existential gap will enrich our understanding of the criminological gap between independent and dependent variables, towards appreciating the agency and resourcefulness of young men caught in potentially violent dilemmas.