



*Cordially invites everyone to our*

SPRING 2009 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

**“Surviving the Streets”**

***Risk in ethnography: research on drugs,  
violence and crime***

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

3:30pm

Sociology Department, Suite 520.14T

**Student Discussants**

**Jennifer Fleetwood**, Visiting Scholar, University of Edinburgh

**Crystal Rodriguez**, Doctoral Student, John Jay College

**Discussants/Presenters:**

**Barry Spunt**, Sociology, John Jay College

**David Brotherton**, Chair of Sociology, John Jay College

**Richard Curtis**, Chair of Anthropology, John Jay College

**Yolanda Martin**, Doctoral Candidate, CUNY Graduate Center

Introduction: Hanging around criminals and places where crime takes is occurring is a risky business. The ethnographer may find themselves witnessing crimes, or if they are particularly unlucky, becoming a victim of crime.

Purpose: This seminar brings together ethnographers with a wide range of experience researching hard to reach populations dealing with drugs and crime in different parts of the world to discuss how risky the position is and how to avoid or reduce risk.

Questions:

1. How dangerous is ethnography? Is it necessarily risky?
2. Where do ‘risks’ emanate from?
3. Who pose danger to the researcher? Our respondents? Gatekeepers? Police? ‘Others’ in the field who are not respondents?
4. Can risk to the researcher be limited or managed? How can we avoid or reduce the risks?
5. What legal requirements do ethnographers have to explain their observations of crimes or illegal activity?
6. What are some IRB issues and how can ethnographers get IRB approval?