

SOCIOLOGY RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Dialog and Disorder Keeping: Police Organizational Sensemaking of Problems in Oakland, California and Stockholm Sweden

While prevailing theory of police culture underscore the role of occupational and situational variables (denoted as strain) in shaping this phenomenon, it does not account for the collective and imperfect ways members of police organizations develop shared understandings that influence officer actions. Drawing on sensemaking analysis, the present study points to the importance of organizational logics (i.e. organizational structures and resources) shaping sensemaking within police agencies. This assertion is based upon comparative ethnographic research focused on the policing of local problems in Oakland, California and Stockholm, Sweden. The findings from this study signal the significance of police culture in producing (rather than only responding to) organizational efficacy, breakdowns, and strain. More broadly, this work sheds light on the role of organizational culture and emotion in mediating organizational learning in the aftermath of challenges and failure events.



December
13, 2023



Phillips Hall 411



1.00 PM -
2.30 PM



Carlos Bustamante

Assistant Professor of
Sociology, George Washington
University



Daanika Gordon

Assistant Professor of
Sociology, Tufts University

Please RSVP
by December 11th



Sociology

Contact soc@gwu.edu
with any questions



Daanika Gordon - Discussant

Daanika Gordon is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Tufts University. Her research examines the institutional and interactional mechanisms that undergird contemporary racial inequality in the city. Specifically, she investigates the ties between segregation, urban governance, and policing, with a focus on how organizational processes intervene between structural inequalities and everyday experiences. Drawing on theories of race and racism, law in action, organizations, and the urban political economy, Dr. Gordon's scholarship analyzes 1) policing as a tool of urban governance, 2) racial inequalities as outcomes of seemingly race-neutral organizational policies, and 3) segregation as a relational and dynamically produced social structure.



Carlos Bustamante - Presenter

Carlos Bustamante is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at The George Washington University. His teaching and research focus on policing, inequality, sociology of race and ethnicity, urban sociology, and comparative ethnography. He is broadly interested in the social and racial underpinnings of legality and legitimacy, comparative penalty, police culture, and criminal legal reform. He is currently working on two research projects. The first compares the policing of restricted forms of entertainment in Oakland, California, Stockholm, Sweden, and Lima, Peru. It investigates how city officials and police target local "problems," and how policed groups respond to and resist different forms of control. His second project researches the emergence of police transparency laws brought about by high-profile incidents of police violence and misconduct. This work considers how these laws contribute to new forms of police accountability, modify policing practices, and realign the key actors and agencies that shape law enforcement.