



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND SOCIETY
BERKELEY LAW

CSLS SPEAKER SERIES

Monday, April 1, 2019

ALESSANDRO DE GIORGI

Professor of Justice Studies, San Jose State University

"We Left from Nothing and We're Back to It."
Prisoner Reentry and Social Abandonment in Oakland

This presentation draws from a 3-year ethnographic study conducted in Oakland, California among a group of formerly incarcerated people facing the challenge of reintegrating into society. An average of 1,700 prisoners are released daily from jails, prisons, and federal penitentiaries in the United States, only to be dumped into the segregated neighborhoods from which they were forcefully taken years before. In the wake of neoliberal cost-reduction strategies affecting community supervision programs and social service agencies, the lived experience of these returning prisoners suggests the emergence of a low-cost model of urban containment largely devolved to market forces and nonprofit agencies for the governing of problem populations. This barely regulated collection of private forces—backed by the ever-looming threat of prison or jail—is all that is left in a postindustrial ghetto stripped bare of the community networks and welfare services that existed before the neoliberal punitive turn of the 1980s and 1990s. In this talk, I will present some ethnographic snapshots from the field in an attempt to shed light on the survival strategies adopted by former prisoners, and to illustrate how the cycle of incarceration and reentry operates as a powerful engine for the reproduction of race and class inequality in the US.

PLACE Selznick Seminar Room, 2240 Piedmont Avenue
TIME 12:45 – 2:00pm. Coffee and water provided. Bag lunches welcome.
INFO <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/centers/center-for-the-study-of-law-society/>
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