

“Waterfront property”: security, territory and everyday precarity in the US inner city

How do inner-city residents negotiate everyday spatial insecurity in their neighborhoods in the context of hypersegregation, hyperincarceration, violent narcotics markets, unemployment, routinized police brutality and interpersonal violence?

How can a theoretically grounded ethnographic analysis focusing on spatial dynamics, contribute to urban policy for the inner city under conditions of predatory neoliberalism? Based on over half a dozen years of ethnographic team fieldwork in Philadelphia’s Puerto Rican inner city (2007 to 2015) I focus on two levels of spatial analysis, the broader historical and current patterns of urban segregation in Philadelphia that structure the relationship of the neighborhood to the city, and second, the pragmatic interactions and affective relations of residents to the two significant infrastructural frames of everyday life, the urban industrial-era rowhome and “the block.”

Friday, October 11, 2019

SHESC Building, Room 254

11:45 AM – 12:00 PM Light Lunch

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Talk

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Laurie Kain Hart is Professor of Anthropology and Global Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is a sociocultural anthropologist with a research focus on the long term effects on persons and communities of ethnopolitical conflict, civil war, state engineered population displacements, migration, nationalism, racism, globalization, and ethnospatial segregation. She is particularly interested in theories of space and place that help us understand the impact of spatial, architectural, and geopolitical forces on social inequality and marginalization. Her research is at the intersection of political anthropology, space and place theory, and medical-psychiatric anthropology. Regionally she specializes in Greece, the Mediterranean area, and the urban US with special emphasis on the intimate experience of the structural violence of inner city segregation.