

Anthropology

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

290 Speaker Series

FALL 2016

2:00-4:00

NEXT EVENT

Redeemed on the Inside: Ecclesia Incarcerate in Ethno- graphic Perspective

Jason Sexton

Lecturer

California State University Fullerton



October 17th
221 Kroeber Hall
Dept. of Anthropology

Abstract: Proposals have been made for how prisoner 'rehabilitation' (or 'redemption') can be accomplished through religious experience in prisons (Kerley; Levad; Dubler), or through faith-based institutions (Sullivan; Johnson) that supplement state efforts of reform. This paper assumes that if prisoners are 'redeemed' it happens through their participation in the life of the church, reconstituting their humanity. Presenting an interdisciplinary theological vision of the redeeming power found in the material content of personal faith, this explores the nature of redemption vis-à-vis other formal and informal community governance structures in carceral settings, as well as in relation to non-incarcerated churches where prisoners are made useful again, redeemed. I will present preliminary results of thirty interviews with former prisoners who participated in the incarcerated church, interpreting the ethnographic data in dialogue with the ancient creedal formula. Thus, it will reinterpret the in-depth interview data so as to begin presenting a coherent vision of what the members of the incarcerated church both are and could be, rendering this robust theology for the carceral context.

Professor Jonathan Simon from the Center for the Study of Law & Society, the author of *Mass Incarceration on Trial: A Remarkable Court Decision and the Future of Prisons in America*, *Poor Discipline: Parole and the Social Control of the Underclass*, and the editor-in-chief of the journal *Punishment and Society* will join the conversation as a discussant.

This event is co-sponsored by The Center for the Study of Law & Society and the Center for Study of Religion.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Andrew Lakoff
University of Southern California
Monday November 7th

Trine Mygind Korsby
Stanford University
Monday November 28th