



Author Event: *The Illusion of Free Markets*

An Afternoon with Bernard Harcourt

SUNDAY February 13 @ 3 pm

Where: Revolution Books, 146 W. 26th Street. Telephone: 212-691-3345.

When: Sunday, February 13, 2011, at 3 p.m.

What: Author discussion by Bernard Harcourt of his new book, *The Illusion of Free Markets: Punishment and the Myth of Natural Order* (Harvard 2011)

Who: Bernard E. Harcourt is the Julius Kreeger Professor of Law and Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago. He is the author of several other books, including *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Harvard 2001), *Language of the Gun* (Chicago 2005), and *Against Prediction: Policing, and Punishing in an Actuarial Age* (Chicago 2007).

Why: It is widely believed today that the free market is the best mechanism ever invented to efficiently allocate resources in society. Just as fundamental is the belief that government has a legitimate and competent role in policing and punishing. The result, in this country, has been an incendiary combination of *laissez faire* and mass incarceration. Today, the United States incarcerates over one percent of its adult population, the highest number and rate in the world. In this book, Bernard Harcourt traces the birth of the idea of natural orderliness in economic thought and its gradual evolution into today's myth of the free market, and explores how it has produced the largest government-run penal sphere on the globe.

"Bernard Harcourt's magisterial book makes a strong and persuasive case for the tight connection of the invisible hand of neoliberal 'free' markets and the iron fist of carceral policies. His erudite blend of history, political thought and economic theory lays bare the dark side of neoliberal penalty. We ignore his powerful democratic voice and view at our own peril!"

— Cornel West

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