Description: Each year, 600,000 Americans are released from an American jail or prison, joining the nearly twenty million people who live with a felony record and the 80 million Americans with a criminal record. They are met by more than 45,000 laws, policies and administrative sanctions upon release that dictate where they live, work and with whom they may spend their time, and they must navigate what Miller calls the supervised society. Join Professor Miller as he examines the afterlife of mass incarceration, attending to how U.S. criminal justice policy has changed the social life of the city and altered the contours of American Democracy one (most often poor black American) family at a time. Drawing on ethnographic data collected across three iconic American cities—Chicago, Detroit, and New York—we will explore what it means to live in a supervised society and how we might find our way out.

Reuben Jonathan Miller is an Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago in the Crown School of Social Work, Policy and Practice where he studies and writes about race, democracy, and the social life of the city. He has been a member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton New Jersey, a fellow at the New America Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, and a visiting scholar at the University of Texas at Austin and Dartmouth College. A native son of Chicago, Miller lives and works on the city’s Southside.