

"Spectres of Finance: Limits to Knowledge and the Politics of Crisis"



Randy Martin,
professor of arts politics
(NYU/ Tisch)

The financial crisis has been a scary thing. Like those before it, much misery and moralism have been visited upon us, with more promised in the name of its resolution. The call for a deeper intellectual and political reckoning haunts us, but the explanatory spirits have tended to take their familiar forms. Whether a spectral economy unmoored from the real, a speculative urge wrapped in performative prophecy, a periodic visitation that affirms what we already know, or a gesture to the primordial sociality that precedes us, the opportunity to think otherwise about what might emerge through this condition of generalized indebtedness, discretionary intervention and excess, is frequently missed. The failure to know finance is a common symptom of crisis that also points to a deeper dislocation of professionalized autonomous knowledge. In this respect there is an abiding affinity between what irks and ails Wall Street and the University. How we regard the socializing effects of finance bear on our capacity to think organizational responses to the decomposition and formation of the professional managerial class. How we locate a relation to the rampant and promiscuous risk around us hints at ways to confront the ghosts of capital so as to think against and beyond the present.

Anthropology Today for the World Tomorrow Speaker Series
Sponsored by the CUNY Graduate Center Department of Anthropology

Friday, October 30th 4:15-6:15 Room C415A.

The Graduate Center
City University of New York 365 Fifth Avenue, NY 10016