An anthropology of the future will need to address, as one of the several powerful institutions that shape the everyday lives of anthropological subjects (states, religions, multinational corporations, etc.), the institution of “organized crime.” Among the many reasons for this is the historical role of United States prohibitionism in generating, and invigorating, criminal enterprises that mediate the transnational procurement and predatory marketing of the very substances and services that are prohibited. Underlying this dynamic of purity producing danger is the close relationship, in the United States, between industrial capitalist and imperial expansion, and legislated prohibitions against alcohol and drugs. The dynamic is further energized, this lecture will propose, by the capacity of organized crime formations to lay down infrastructure, penetrate legal institutions and enterprises, offer benefits, and propagate enduring cultures of risk and excitement.

4:15pm, Room C415A
Friday, October 2nd, 2009