

22 May 2018 | 16:15 – 18:00

# What Not to Do When Your Roommate is Murdered in Italy:

The Amanda Knox Case

Martha Grace Duncan | Emory Law School



One of the most widely publicized cases of our time is that of Amanda Knox, the college student from West Seattle who was convicted of murdering her British roommate in Italy and served four years in prison before being acquitted and released. Retried in absentia, she was convicted again, only to be exonerated by the Italian Supreme Court, which handed down its final opinion in September, 2015.

This lecture explores the Amanda Knox case in the context of our defective ability to judge. Drawing on her interviews with numerous Italian legal experts and with Amanda herself, the speaker will address a broader problem: that of human beings' prejudice against "strangeness" and our desperation for a hasty assessment of guilt or innocence – qualities that can bleed into a legal system to the detriment of the quest for truth.

*(speaker's abstract)*

**Martha Grace Duncan** is a Professor of Law at Emory University in Atlanta. She earned a Ph.D. in political science at Columbia University and a law degree at Yale, where she was an Articles Editor of the Yale Law Journal. Her interdisciplinary book, *Romantic Outlaws, Beloved Prisons: The Unconscious Meanings of Crime and Punishment*, was published by NYU Press. Her article "So Young and So Untender: Remorseless Children and the Expectations of the Law" was published in Columbia Law Review and has been quoted in The New Yorker as well as in numerous legal documents. Her research interests focus on the symbolism and meanings of prison, the functions of the criminal for the law-abiding citizen, Spanish language and literature, and law and psychoanalysis.

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Venue: Main Seminar Room | MPI for Social Anthropology

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