



Frontiers of Capital: Ethnographic Reflections on the New Economy (e-Duke books scholarly collection.)

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With the NASDAQ having lost 70 percent of its value, the giddy, optimistic belief in perpetual growth that accompanied the economic boom of the 1990s had fizzled by 2002. Yet the advances in information and communication technology, management and production techniques, and global integration that spurred the “New Economy” of the 1990s had triggered profound and lasting changes. *Frontiers of Capital* brings together ethnographies exploring how cultural practices and social relations have been altered by the radical economic and technological innovations of the New Economy. The contributors, most of whom are anthropologists, investigate changes in the practices and interactions of futures traders, Chinese entrepreneurs, residents of French housing projects, women working on Wall Street, cable television programmers, and others.

Some contributors highlight how expedited flows of information allow business professionals to develop new knowledge practices. They analyze dynamics ranging from the decision-making processes of the Federal Reserve Board to the legal maneuvering necessary to buttress a nascent Japanese market in over-the-counter derivatives. Others focus on the social consequences of globalization and new modes of communication, evaluating the introduction of new information technologies into African communities and the collaborative practices of open-source computer programmers. Together the essays suggest that social relations, rather than becoming less relevant in the high-tech age, have become more important than ever. This finding dovetails with the thinking of many corporations, which increasingly employ anthropologists to study and explain the “local” cultural practices of their own workers and consumers. *Frontiers of Capital* signals the wide-ranging role of anthropology in explaining the social and cultural contours of the New Economy.

Contributors. Jean Comaroff, John L. Comaroff, Greg Downey, Melissa S. Fisher, Douglas R. Holmes, George E. Marcus, Siobhán O’Mahony, Aihwa Ong, Annelise Riles, Saskia Sassen, Paul A. Silverstein, AbdouMalik Simone, Neil Smith, Caitlin Zaloom

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