

**Robin Wagner-Pacifci**

**Our Age of Crisis: Donald Trump's Elongated Rupture as Elusive Event**

**ABSTRACT**

Societies rely on fundamental mechanisms of representation, demonstration, and performance to experience and shape critical historical events. This talk considers what it means to live in an age in which there appears to be a deliberate undermining of these mechanisms and traditional conventions. Specific examples of temporal, spatial, and geo-political confusions give analytical substance to the claim that this American presidential administration is unprecedented, and presents the theoretical framework of eventful political semiosis to make sense of this historical moment.

**BIO**

Robin Wagner-Pacifci is University in Exile Professor of Sociology at the New School for Social Research. She has written on social, political, and violent conflict and its termination. She is the author of *The Art of Surrender: Decomposing Sovereignty at Conflict's End* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), *Theorizing the Standoff: Contingency in Action* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), winner of the ASA Culture Section best book award), *Discourse and Destruction: The City of Philadelphia vs MOVE* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), and *The Moro Morality Play: Terrorism as Social Drama* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), and most recently, *What is an Event?* (University of Chicago Press, 2017). An ongoing collaboration analyzing official national security texts draws from both close (hermeneutic) and distant (computational) approaches to textual analysis and has generated several publications, including the coauthored Poetics article, "Graphing the Grammar of Motives in U.S. National Security Strategies: Cultural Interpretation, Automated Text Analysis and the Drama of Global Politics."