



UWA BUSINESS SCHOOL BOOK SEMINAR

ORGANISED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GLOBAL STUDIES RESEARCH CENTRE

ALL STAFF & STUDENTS WELCOME

“Debating the Free Market in an Age of Insecurity”

Professor Webster and Dr Bezuidenhout, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Professor Lambert, UWA Business School

Professorial Fellow Carmen Lawrence, UWA’s Institute of Advanced Studies

Welcome by and Master of Ceremonies

Professor Tracey Horton, Dean, UWA Business School

Introduction by

Professor Alan Robson, Vice Chancellor, UWA

Date: Tuesday 18th August 2009
Time: 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm
Venue: Ernst & Young Lecture Theatre (G89), UWA Business School
Enquiries: Prof Rob Lambert 6488 2934 (Rob.Lambert@uwa.edu.au)
RSVP: Kylie Weston, 6488 5825 (kylie.weston@uwa.edu.au)

Light refreshments will be served after proceedings

The Speakers:

The authors, Professor Webster and Dr Bezuidenhout from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and Professor Lambert from the UWA Business School, will present the essential findings of the research.

Past Premier of Western Australia, Carmen Lawrence and now Professorial Fellow of UWA's Institute of Advanced Studies will respond to the presentation as an entry into a many sided audience debate on this critical question.

Abstract:

The Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd provoked considerable debate when he criticized the rise of 'market fundamentalism' in Australia in the magazine *Monthly Review*. According to Rudd, the strategy of unregulated markets,

'...unleashed new forces of market fundamentalism against youth workers; families trying to spend sufficient time together; and communities trying to negotiate with single, major employers experimenting with their new found powers. Breadwinners are now at risk of working less predictable shifts, spread over a seven day week, not sensitive to weekends, and possibly for less take-home pay. The pressures on relationships, parenting and the cost and quality of child care are without precedent.'

This reflected a situation where persons are treated no differently

'...to any other commodity: it too is something whose value should be determined on a free market.'

There are those who would argue that the current global financial crisis and the social destruction which it has produced is yet another confirmation of the deeply flawed nature of the free market model.

We therefore invite you to a debate on the award winning book, **Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity**, which critiques the free market model through careful comparative research of corporate restructuring across three countries: Australia, Korea and South Africa. The research explored organizational change in three factories and its impact on families and communities.

Grounding Globalization won the *American Sociological Association's* Best book of the year award in labour studies for 2008, out-competing 30 submissions from around the globe.

Internationally published reviews have commented,

'The insights, theoretical sophistication and empirical reach of Grounding Globalisation will inspire a deeper understanding of the interplay of global forces in shaping the lives and consciousness of workers at the local level. It should inspire us both as scholars and (for the most part) as committed activists. Fittingly, the book ends with a call for the readers to stand up and be counted as 'engaged intellectuals.'

Richard Hyman, Professor of Industrial Relations, London School of Economics

'Grounding Globalization is a seminal work which is certain to make a significant contribution in advancing our knowledge of this latest phase in the evolution of labor studies. Without doubt future texts will be influenced both by the insights of this comparative study and the contradictions which emerge in the narrative.'

Ronaldo Munck, Professor of Internationalisation, Interculturalism & Social Development, Dublin University.