“Lotto scammers” in Jamaica who use Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephony to con American citizens into sending money to Jamaica see their practice as a form of reparations for the long histories and circuits of colonial and postcolonial inequality. Rather than focusing on reparations as a quantification of redress, which renders restitution as the sole responsibility of appropriate former colonial powers, this paper will explore how, through a reparative logic of seizure, scammers reformulate sites of transgression and the currencies and processes for repayment. Doing so asks us to reconsider the concept of reparations in the Caribbean, opening it up to serve as more than a means of recompense withheld by one party and expected by the other. Instead, reparations becomes an engagement that denotes the continued productivity of postcolonial relations where transgression and transaction proffer novel forms of dialogic reciprocity.

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Monday
November 13th, 3:30 - 5:00 PM
Building 50, 51A

Anthropology Colloquium Series