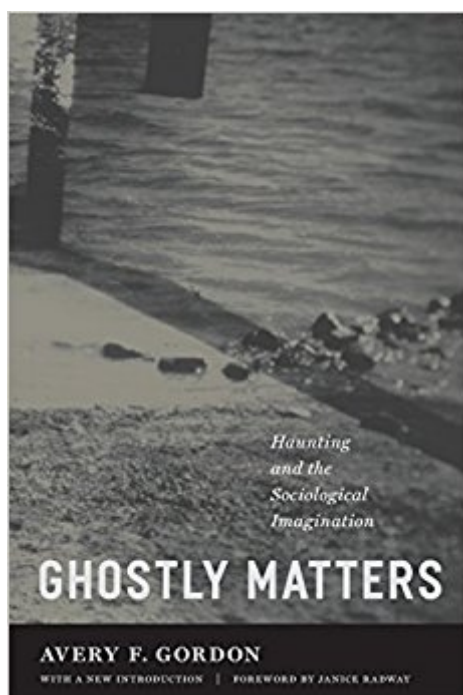


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# Ghostly Matters: Haunting And The Sociological Imagination



## Synopsis

Avery Gordon's stunningly original and provocatively imaginative book explores the connections linking horror, history, and haunting. "George Lipsitz" "The text is of great value to anyone working on issues pertaining to the fantastic and the uncanny." "American Studies International" "Ghostly Matters immediately establishes Avery Gordon as a leader among her generation of social and cultural theorists in all fields. The sheer beauty of her language enhances an intellectual brilliance so daunting that some readers will mark the day they first read this book. One must go back many more years than most of us can remember to find a more important book." "Charles Lemert" Drawing on a range of sources, including the fiction of Toni Morrison and Luisa Valenzuela (*He Who Searches*), Avery Gordon demonstrates that past or haunting social forces control present life in different and more complicated ways than most social analysts presume. Written with a power to match its subject, *Ghostly Matters*

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Univ Of Minnesota Press; 2nd edition (February 29, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0816654468

ISBN-13: 978-0816654468

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (9 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I find *Ghostly Matters* a brilliant, useful, and (hauntingly) beautiful book. I especially appreciate the way Gordon brings together ostensibly disparate approaches and subjects (sociology and literary studies, the material and the spiritual, Argentina's "disappeared" and slavery in the U.S., and different kinds of writing in her own text) to call into question our conventional ways of seeing, to bring back those whom History and "just the Facts, ma'am" have tried to bury or relegate to permanent shadow. I'm going to give this book as a holiday present to everyone I love who hasn't

read it already.

Gordon's passion for literature goes beyond admiration; she chooses to look closely into two fiction pieces to study our past; ghosts that haunts us. And why fiction? Any literary piece is part of a larger body of general knowledge and it's as a result of the influences that the authors have had in their lives and the ways they read/remember us hence becoming a collective intellect that takes us to where we were/are and might want to go.

Quibble (as many well) with the specifics of particular examples, or the choice of them, Gordon's crucial conceptual leap is to explain the supernatural in terms of the psychology of anxiety, hallucination, and ultimately, religion and myth. Her work adds a critical, and unifying, piece to the work of Joseph Campbell, Sigmund Freud and others which ultimately go to the underlying workings of the human mind and the bases of consciousness.

Avery Gordon is, by far, one of brightest and best social theorists. Her examination of haunting and ghosts is worthwhile to anyone interested in how power functions in the postmodern world.

Gordon presents an alternative and unique perspective on other ways of knowing. She helps us to understand the limits of traditional disciplines, such as sociology, and shows us how to go beyond those limits.

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