technologies. However, I was left wondering at times if all of this talk about cyborgs is just another fashionable academic trend. Although cyborg terminology takes analysts beyond the simplistic good/bad dichotomy, I am not sure it is a useful and/or appropriate analytical tool for every chapter in this volume. The concept of cyborg is important because it forces acknowledgment of the ever-present interdependence between humans and the tools and technology we create; yet, application of the concept should be careful and judicious. For instance, is there a danger in talking about cyborg fetuses, particularly if they become conflated with cyborg babies? Furthermore, how useful is the cyborg concept when it comes to contraceptive as opposed to new conceptive technologies? In fact, discussions of new contraceptive technologies and practices (or the lack thereof) are often absent in debates about NRTs.

On the whole, however, the contributors to this volume add much needed empirical insights to a growing body of work concerned with the effects of NRTs on how middle-class Americans conceive of, and partake in, various processes of reproduction. Although I particularly recommend this collection since it includes important enthnographic work, I must confess that my favorite chapter (as well as that of my colleagues who have read the book) is Ashford's science fiction piece entitled "Natural Love." In her chapter, Ashford takes readers to a future society in which the very act of heterosexual procreation has become fully medicalized. Without any of the academic jargon that often infiltrates scholarship on NRTs, Ashford clarifies points made elsewhere regarding issues of medicalization, choice, risk, and the naturalization of technological interventions. This chapter should be enjoyable for all readers, regardless of their particular areas of research (a few steamy sex scenes spice it up!); and the chapter provides an easy way to introduce new students, particularly undergraduates, to these important issues that will increasingly confront Americans in the 21st century.

The Anthropology of Pregnancy Loss: Comparative Studies in Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Neonatal Death. ROSANNE CECIL, ed. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1996. xii + 226 pp., contributors, index.

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The title of this book underscores the more intriguing and problematic aspects of this topic. The study of pregnancy loss is intriguing as it covers a range of events (from miscarriage to neonatal death) not frequently discussed; it is problematic for it is a slippery term to define. As the editor rightly observes in her introduction, very little has been written about pregnancy loss—miscarriage, stillbirth, and neonatal death (the death of a child within one month of birth)—from the perspective of women experiencing these events in different cultural and historical contexts. One reason for this lack of discussion lies in the fact that these events are often accorded little social significance; fetuses, stillborns, and newborn infants are not considered fully social, that is, human beings. This appears to be the case in societies in which high infant mortality contributes to the perception of the fragility of newborn life. Yet, in several societies with low infant mortality, an increase in the use of technologies such as ultrasound and hormonal assays has led to earlier definitions of when pregnancy begins and hence to an expanded sense of pregnancy loss. Thus, in writing about perceptions of miscarriage, stillbirth, and neonatal death, many contributors to this volume necessarily include discussions of culturally specific ideas about procreation and conception. These ideas, in turn, affect how women themselves know they are pregnant.

For example, Jeffrey and Jeffrey write that, in one Northern Indian society, conception is viewed as a process in which a man's semen (or "water") enters the uterus. The cervix then closes, thus preventing the escape of the menstrual blood, which provides the necessary environment for the semen/seed's growth. This cessation of menstrual flow is a necessary but insufficient sign of pregnancy since three months must transpire before a woman is considered to be pregnant. Any blood passed in the interim is not considered as a pregnancy loss but rather as "a blob of flesh" (p. 24). Several other papers (Njikam Savage, Wembah-Rashid, and Winkvist) similarly document how cultural definitions of procreative processes affect the meaning of pregnancy in several African societies.

Variations in delineating the boundaries of pregnancy are also seen in the ways that miscarriage or spontaneous abortion is interpreted. Depending on the time of a miscarriage, blood associated with it may be interpreted as delayed menstruation, "a blob of flesh," or an induced abortion. Some women who miscarry may be suspected of inducing, rather than spontaneously experiencing, an abortion, as occurred in a series of court cases in 18th-century England (Jackson). In her study of South African women's experiences of pregnancy loss, Chambers suggests that some women who gave false names when attending hospitals did so because they had obtained an illegally induced abortion.

The interpretation of pregnancy loss can also be affected by the dynamics of gender relations. Cecil describes how grieving for such events is downplayed in Northern Ireland as "just a woman's thing"—husbands rarely talk with their wives about such matters. In Jamaica, a "false belly" (a pregnancy that does not go to full term) may be attributed to a spirit husband whose irresponsibility mirrors some women's experiences in this world; these women may view a subsequent miscarriage as spiritual cleansing (Sobo). The Abelam of Papua New Guinea may attribute a miscarriage to a woman's failure to work, for women have little control over childbearing decisions and their husbands expect them to continue domestic labor during pregnancy (Winkvist).

The papers in this cross-cultural volume represent many different societies, and the authors represent many distinct disciplinary backgrounds, primarily social and cultural anthropology, but also biological anthropology, epidemiology, sociology, and history. Not surprisingly, their different methodological approaches, combined with the range of *interpretations of what constitutes pregnancy loss in* different places and periods, complicates a comparative analysis of these phenomena. Nonetheless, certain themes, some discussed in the brief introduction, emerge from these papers, including the interesting question of causality and culpability. Depending on the social and cultural context, miscarriage is attributed to jealous kin, to biomedical explanations such as "damaged ovum," to punishment for sexual transgressions such as adultery, to God's will, and to women's own carelessness (self-blame). The specifics of these explanations vary considerably. For example, the biomedical explanations of miscarriage (genetic causes, immune factors, hormonal deficiencies, and infectious diseases) discussed by DeLuca and Leslie differ from explanations given by Cameroonian women in the chapter authored by Savage. Cameroonian women attribute miscarriage to human action (excessive work, women's and men's sexual misconduct, witchcraft, and failure to perform particular rituals) more often than physiological causes (such as "water in the stomach"). These explanations, like newsletters for women who have experienced pregnancy loss in the United States, are important for women hoping to allay future pregnancy loss and to come to terms with the discrepancy between "normal" expectations and "unthinkable" events (Layne).

Because of the heterogeneity of this topic and the distinctive differences among disciplinary approaches to it, the volume presents something of a pastiche of papers. The different methodological approaches leave one with a longing for more ethnographic specifics about the women interviewed, on the one hand, and for a more theoretical analysis of these women's actions and beliefs, on the other. An expanded introduction linking the papers together might have led to a more cohesive book. For example, while the editor usefully discusses references to miscarriage in Western and anthropological literatures, these references do little to explain the cross-cultural imagery of falling, pouring, and loosening mentioned in several papers in this volume. Nonetheless, the contributors to the volume provide a rich variety of readings on an under-reported and, until recently, an unremarked-upon topic.

Missionaries, Anthropologists, and Human Rights. **THOMAS H. HEADLAND and DARRELL L. WHITEMAN, eds. Theme Issue, *Missiology: An International Review* 24(2). Scottsdale, PA: American Society of Missiology, 1996. 157 pp., notes, references cited, contributors.**

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In his introduction to this collection of papers from the 1994 American Anthropological Association Symposium on Missionaries and Human Rights, James Peacock reasons that "neither uncritical lovers nor unloving critics are sufficient" (p. 165) when it comes to anthropological encounters with religion. He favors a range of positions on the topic, including that of the committed believer. Of the seven papers included here, five represent the missionary perspective.

Several of the papers take a notably defensive tone in response to anthropological hostility towards missionaries. Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) missionary-anthropologist Thomas Headland declares "I am being falsely maligned" (p. 171). Given the negative attention SIL, in particular, has received from anthropologists for destroying native cultures, it is not surprising that he uses this forum to recall how he blocked logging company bulldozers with his own body in the Philippine rain forest. The annotated bibliography by Headland and Webster included in this volume guides the reader to related literature.

Thomas Moore, another SIL missionary-anthropologist, states that "SIL has been contributing to indigenous peoples' right to ethnic sovereignty for 50 years" (p. 209). He joins those third world scholars who claim that Christian missions are often the basis for revitalization of indigenous cultures rather than for Western cultural domination.

Other papers locate the missionary enterprise within a complex landscape of competition for resources, power, and influence. Randall Borman, the son of SIL missionaries, was born and raised among the Cofan of Ecuador. After a year of college in the United States, he returned to marry a Cofan woman and "become" Cofan. Borman's personal story raises interesting questions about the reverse assimilation process as an aspect of missionary experience. In this volume, he presents an evenly balanced account of the beginnings of missionization and oil exploration in the region, an account which benefits from inclusion of the Cofan view of the situation. Cofan chief Guillermo Quenama had his own motivations for letting the missionaries in and seemed to be able to take what he wanted from them and leave the rest. Borman commends SIL for their medical programs and for adding legitimacy to the continuing use of the Cofan language. He feels SIL failed, however, in not being aggressive enough in defending Cofan territorial rights. Still, SIL was "the only organization which championed Cofan land rights at all in the crucial period between 1972–1978" (p. 198).

Darrell Whiteman recounts the story of the death of Anglican Bishop John Coleridge Patteson at the hands of Solomon Islanders in 1871. He interprets this event as "a dramatic case study of missionary involvement in championing human rights" (p. 248). The labor trade displaced a million-and-a-half people in the South Pacific. Although Patteson had denounced the labor trade, he was killed in retaliation for the kidnapping of five men by labor recruiters. His death led to the passage of legislation regulating labor recruitment. Simlarly, Ricardo Falla, a Guatemalan Jesuit anthropologist, has chronicled the 1982 massacre of 350 people in the hamlet of San Francisco in Guatemala. Falla played the combined roles of witness, reporter, and priest, serving the religious needs of refugees hiding from the army in the mountains. In his contribution to the volume, Falla calls for a more activist stance from anthropologists.