



## Book Reviews

**Caravan of Martyrs: Sacrifice and Suicide Bombing in Afghanistan.** David B. Edwards. Oakland: University of California Press, 2017. 292 pp.

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When David Edwards was 10, he received a postcard from his grandmother, who traveled in Afghanistan in the 1960s. That postcard—where she described the caravans arriving at the bazaar beneath her hotel window—was the catalyst for Edwards's desire to become an anthropologist and to engage as closely as he could with the people in that country. As with so many of us, anthropology's attractions were tinged with a certain romance. But the Afghanistan that Edwards first visited in 1978 was, within a few short years, riven with extremes of unimaginable violence instigated by foreign powers using the land and its people as proxies in global conflicts. This powerful book, Edwards tells us, is not the one "I imagined myself writing, or would have wanted to write, when I set off on my journey. But it is the book that I needed to write because it tells a story that has to be told" (xii). Instead of the postcard caravan, it is the caravan of martyrs in the war-littered landscape of 21st-century Afghanistan that Edwards takes as his theme.

Central to this spread of martyrdom has been the act of suicide bombing: the basis of an explicit strategy first championed by Osama bin Laden in a February 2003 video encouraging "martyrdom operations against the enemy" (15). Picked up by the Taliban, which started its own attacks, the numbers have risen ever since: from 2 in 2003 and 20 in 2005 to 140 in 2007 and averaging 100 per year now. How has it developed, Edwards asks, that "men (and sometimes even women and children) would come to consider it a good thing to strap bombs onto their bodies, walk into crowded places, and trigger the bombs, knowing not only that they will lose their own lives but also that they will take with them a large number of strangers?" (15).

To provide context for the upsurge in suicide bombing after the end of the Soviet invasion, Edwards traces its evolution against the backdrop of political movements and events that include the Afghan resistance to the Soviet invasion; the rise of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and the Taliban; the US invasion of Afghanistan following 9/11;

and the presidential elections of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani. Drawing upon Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss's classic text on sacrifice, Edwards rereads and reweaves this by reference to theoretical others, including Giorgio Agamben's notion of *Homo sacer* and Marshall Sahlins's theory of the conjuncture—moments in which "disparate aspects of history, myth, and ritual come together and collide" (17)—which he sees as being mediated by the ritual form.

Following Sahlins here, Edwards treats suicide bombing as a sacrificial ritual: a ritual of sacrifice that demands something to be given up. This involves, in the first stage, the act of killing oneself and others and, in the second stage, the act of witnessing (by one's community) that absorbs the ritual, leading to a surplus energy that comes from engaging in collective action: what Edwards considers to be the constitution of sacredness here. Through this "sacrifice machine" (46), what was once profane is transformed into something sacred that gets ritualistically rehearsed and politically manipulated. Not merely symbols or ancillary rites, these forms of sacrifice are the very means by which the struggle has been articulated and carried out.

Sacrifice, as Edwards so carefully notes, has always been part of local custom and tradition in the region—deeply tied as it has been to the central values of honor and kin loyalty. But such kin-based ties, while uppermost early on in the conflict, gave way over time to a competing ethos: one in which the role of tribes diminished in the wake of the Soviet invasion in 1979, when the power of Islamic political parties expanded, taking root in Peshawar and spreading across the frontier into the Afghan heartland. Whereas once the village was the hub of communal life, now the center of activity and symbolic locus—for those mainly men engaged in fighting—has become the *sangar*, the trench or bunker. And in the relative absence of women and children, who fled to refugee camps in Pakistan, and in the face of transformations in warfare from the onslaught of Kalashnikov AK-47s by the Soviets to drone warfare by the Americans, martyrdom—as in a practice ritualizing death as something not merely inevitable or lamentable but actively sought, even desirable—has entrenched itself into the everydayness of life in Afghanistan.

The ethnographic sweep of this book is stunning. Reaching back into his earliest engagement with the region 40 years ago, Edwards covers a breathtaking expanse of terrain: Afghan mujahidin, martyr magazines, Taliban

poetry, 1,500 audiocassettes belonging to Osama bin Laden, Pakistani madrasas, Taliban Facebook friends. Theory and ethnography brilliantly entwine here. For example, in the chapter on selfies, Edwards analyzes the now-commonplace practice of posting dead or soon-to-be dead martyrs on Facebook in terms of face—the loss of face and the attempt to recapture it at a moment when Americans have resorted to a form of warfare experienced as both insidious and degrading. Here the faces get made up—as if in wedding photos, which as Edwards argues they in a sense are—and the tranquility of their composure contrasts with the violence enacted on the bodies of others who will be brutally, often randomly, killed. The dissonance is striking: getting married to murder. Martyrdom as sacrifice, identity, all there is.

Utterly original, *Caravan of Martyrs* is compelling from beginning to end. This is anthropology at its best: a real tour de force.

**Modern Afghanistan: The Impact of 40 Years of War.** *M. Nazif Shahrani*, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018. 456 pp.

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As a broad yet detailed introduction to modern Afghanistan, this interdisciplinary collection of essays on social and political life in Afghanistan over the past 40 years is arguably one of the best available. However, the reader should not be misled by the book's subtitle. The collection does not exclusively analyze the effects of war. It also addresses the effects of colonialism, foreign intervention, and state failure.

*Modern Afghanistan* also covers new scholarly ground by drawing on authors who have all recently conducted fieldwork. It incorporates 17 essays from 20 contributors, most of whom are early-career researchers, many of whom are Afghan, and almost half of whom are anthropologists. The essays emerged, first, from presentations given at the 2012 annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association and, second, from a workshop hosted at Indiana University in early 2014. This two-stage process produced in most cases well-written and analytically rigorous contributions.

In his introduction, editor Nazif Shahrani outlines how the notion of failed state building structures the volume's four parts. The first part addresses what he terms the "shifting technologies of state power" (7) or the impacts of colonialism and violence upon national identity, statehood, and stability. These issues are discussed by Amin Saikal, Bashir Ahmad Ansari, Mohammad Omar Sharifi, Khalid Homayun

Nadiri and M. Farshid Alemi Hakimyar, Timor Sharan, Noah Coburn, Ahmad Shayeq Qassem, and Wazhmah Osman. Sharifi convincingly argues for a reconceived appreciation of Persian language and, indeed, Persian poetry as a crucial factor in the formation of national identity in Afghanistan—these are groundbreaking connections. Ansari's essay is also notable given his insightful exploration of changing practices of Islamic education and militancy since the onset of war in Afghanistan in 1979. Turning to dynamics of post-Taliban leadership and governance, Sharan and Coburn each focus on different forms of leadership. Using a novel analytical approach, Sharan demonstrates how old jihadi political networks and new Western networks are entangled in a series of interdependencies that underpin and sustain the functioning of the state. Coburn, on the other hand, investigates changes in local-level leadership. Masterfully exposing the sinister effects of foreign intervention, he contends that the unstable local political economy—disrupted by post-Taliban aid efforts—has changed how leadership is determined. This has permitted "a new generation of younger political leaders to arise that are taking advantage of the ongoing conflict" (124).

The volume's second part considers the influence of foreign interference, war, and state weakness upon identities, gender, and state-society relations. Essays by Andrea Chiovenda, Sonia Ahsan, and Robert Canfield and Fahim Masoud investigate these social dynamics. Expertly exploring the underresearched theme of masculinity among Pashtuns in eastern Afghanistan, Chiovenda demonstrates how violence and deviant behavior have created new emergent schemes of manliness, and how these competing forms of masculinity feature in contemporary Pashtun lives. The gendered politics of the Taliban regime are interrogated in Ahsan's noteworthy essay, which charts the regime's penetration of the public and private realms of Afghan society. Dissecting the Taliban's policies, she explains that the effectiveness of their efforts can be attributed to "the *methods* of interpreting Islamic laws, the primacy of moral policing, the engendering of administrative regulations, and the reinforced surveillance for potential sexual transgressions" (204).

Center-periphery relations and marginalization are the focus of the four essays in the third part. Nazif Shahrani presents an excellent longitudinal analysis of the changing standing of the people of Badakhshan's position in national politics over the past four decades of conflict. Shifting focus from Badakhshan to the central highlands, Melissa Kerr Chiovenda portrays ambiguous relations between Hazara Shi'as and the state in present-day Afghanistan. By capitalizing on opportunities for advancement following an extended period of state oppression, Hazaras occupy a paradoxical position in which they wholeheartedly contribute to the Afghan state-building project "from inside the very apparatus they distrust" (267). Just Boedeker discusses how

Baloch utilize *kaum*, a polysemic concept indicating social belonging, to navigate social volatility during war. This essay stands out as one of only a handful of insightful accounts of social organization in southwestern Afghanistan. Anna Larson skillfully reveals the effects of Afghanistan's shifting political order upon political parties and women's political participation.

The final part of the volume focuses on the impacts of conflict on the delivery of social services. Both essays in this part lay down an explicit challenge to conventional scholarly thinking. Kylea Laina Liese's thought-provoking discussion of childbirth challenges analysts to move beyond a focus on maternal mortality alone. She draws attention to the social context of healthy births, emphasizing "the ethnographic importance of the vast majority of Afghan births as the event where society, culture, and families are reproduced" (322). In the volume's final essay, Parul Bakhshi and Jean-Francois Trani contend that the growing sense of distrust that Afghans feel in relation to ongoing development efforts and the delivery of services results from aid initiatives that fail to align with Afghan cultural and social norms. This claim is made in opposition to dominant discourses blaming state corruption and persistent insecurity.

The quality and scope of the contributions in this collection qualify it as required reading for scholars and students of anthropology and political science who seek to develop their understanding of modern Afghanistan. More specifically, the anthropological essays will be of interest not only to political and sociocultural anthropologists but also to instructors delivering courses on the anthropology of the Middle East and South or Central Asia. If any major criticism is to be leveled at *Modern Afghanistan*, it would be the striking omission of research exploring the psychosocial impacts of conflict in the country. The inclusion of such research—drawing on psychology and medical anthropology—would inevitably be required when interpreting the effects of 40 years of war on Afghanistan and its people.

**Global Inequality.** *Kenneth McGill.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. 136 pp.

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*Global Inequality* is published in a series called Anthropological Insights: Bridging the Gap between Research and Teaching. The text speaks directly to such a project. Kenneth McGill has organized his discussion in eight chapters, first giving an overview of his approach, then examining inequality in relation to such topics as colonialism

and neocolonialism, global capitalism, nationalism and the nation-state, gender, and people's experiences of various forms of inequality and their resistance to it. As McGill tells us in the preface, he did not set out to present his own research in this book; rather, he set out to draw on the works of others, weaving them together to form a coherent guide for undergraduates. In some ways, the book reads like an interdisciplinary review article: McGill's narrative strings together summaries (generously conceived and skillfully written) of works by scholars in a number of disciplines that have contributed to his ongoing attempts to make sense of the topic. The result gives us a remarkable picture of the state of anthropology today for several reasons.

First, McGill's topical synthesis required him to read widely across disciplines. While he has a notion of the distinctive features of anthropology as a discipline, his book strikes me as a text emergent from and addressed to an interdisciplinary global studies program. I have been teaching in such a program for the last 10 years, and McGill's presentation of the relevant literature is similar to my pedagogy in this project: providing students with readings drawn from any number of disciplines, learning from those disciplines as I teach, but organizing it all in terms of some kind of anthropological perspective. In such work, anthropology—as I experience it and as McGill suggests—is no longer a sovereign discipline. Certainly we anthropologists are no longer theory exporters, as we were in the heyday of structuralism and symbolic anthropology. We glean theory now from whatever fields we can find it—and from disciplines that hardly existed in the 1960s. Theoretically omnivorous and gathering our empirical materials in an equally opportunistic manner, we find the "anthropology" label becoming decreasingly prominent in our pedagogy, as "studies" programs organized around topics (like global inequality) become increasingly legible to undergraduates.

Yet anthropology remains at the heart of McGill's text. For one thing, there are more anthropologists represented in the scholarship he draws on than practitioners of any other discipline; a quick inspection of his bibliography shows that about half the entries come from anthropologists, the other half from the other disciplines combined. More important, McGill's synthesis prioritizes scholarship growing out of ethnographic fieldwork, in which researchers personally connect to people's situated experiences of inequality. Such scholarship can occur in other disciplines, but it remains the hallmark of anthropology. And ethnographic fieldwork gets us to a central claim in McGill's book: since all local scenes are now embedded in global networks, research attentive to people's experiences of inequality must consider not only the local factors that affect it (such as culturally specific forms of gender relations) but equally relevant global factors (such as capitalist economic structures).

All well and good, but why is inequality an important topic for anthropology as a discipline? McGill answers this question on the first page of his book: “People define themselves in relation to one another. This means that the inequalities that exist between us are bound to affect who we actually are. . . . Even in those moments when inequality seems clearly justifiable, it remains a problem. To be unequal to someone else is to be different from them in a way that truly matters” (1). A page later, he adds, “inequality refers to some sort of difference in status, wealth, or power that is to the benefit of one person or group and to the detriment of another” (2).

Such a definition emanates squarely from modern culture (“modern” in the grand sense referring to the world order of nationalism, democracy, and capitalism). Modern culture defines itself by delegitimizing hierarchical social formations (as Alexis de Tocqueville explained before professional anthropology came into being). McGill’s notion of “who we actually are” seems inextricably entangled with modern egalitarian notions of the person as the sovereign subject of social science, which led, historically, to various contract theories in which the social is understood as a reflex of the individual. And while as a citizen of the same world that McGill inhabits I largely agree with his political critique of inequality, as an anthropologist I do not assume that the study of human relationships in context requires us to privilege, as a fundamental theoretical or methodological premise, sameness over difference.

McGill’s universalistic definition of inequality is consonant with his minimalist presentation of anthropology as defined solely by its method: ethnographic fieldwork. In this book, the discipline seems to have no theoretical content. Perhaps this is because McGill dismisses much anthropological knowledge by critiquing its origins in colonial research situations. He argues that in the discipline’s foundational texts, anthropologists objectified their subjects as people apart from the global (colonial) systems of power in which they were enmeshed; in doing so, they were replicating the “colonial domination” that “separated people into clearly divided, administrable units” (8) and that also made ethnographic research possible in the first place. Still, anthropology’s complicity in colonialism does not mean that anthropologists in colonial field situations learned little from the people they studied. Indeed, they often learned quite a lot. And what they learned, however imperfectly, about other cultural worlds has decisively shaped anthropological theory, allowing us to critique many of the foundational assumptions of modernity, including those relative to egalitarian individualism.

In the end, then, I admire *Global Inequality* for its incisive sketches of various forms of inequality and the ways they interact in the lives of people who live in specific local contexts shaped by equally specific global forces. But as a text to be used to bridge the gap between research

and teaching, it will need to be supplemented by a more richly anthropological treatment of inequality as a theoretical concept.

**Ark Encounter: The Making of a Creationist Theme Park.**

James S. Bielo. New York: New York University Press, 2018. 240 pp.

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Americans just can’t quit the material. Even fundamentalist Christians, committed as they are to the soteriological doctrine of grace alone through faith alone, are feeling the need to see their beliefs materialized. Protestants who have for centuries eschewed religious intermediaries and stripped their churches of ornamentation now flesh out the determining moments of their faith with biblical museums, gardens, foods, and re-creations of sites and objects that promise the faithful an opportunity to see, touch, smell, hear, and taste the otherwise immaterial biblical past. *Ark Encounter* in Williamstown, Kentucky, brilliantly examined by James Bielo, is one of the most extraordinary examples of this development.

In six chapters that thoroughly and engagingly assess how religious publicity takes shape when entertainment becomes the preferred means to shore up the faithful and convert the skeptical, Bielo walks us through an actual ark built to the specifications recounted in the Bible. Along the way, he introduces us to the design team that brought the project to fruition as well as the exhibits housed in the ark. These include depictions of what the designers imagine life on the ark to have been like as well as lively installations of dinosaurs and dragons winningly fashioned to contest more sober scientific explanations for the diversity and variability of life on earth—that is, the theory of evolution—that relegate some creatures to mythology, others, no matter how seemingly fantastic, to fact. We also learn about debates over the design of the walkway that leads visitors from the parking lot to the ark itself: how *do* you camouflage a behemoth 300 cubits long and 30 cubits high to maximize the impact of the reveal moment when visitors finally arrive? Although the dominant analytical frame for scholars who write about creationism has been the relationship between religion and science, in this work Bielo is more curious about the relationship between religion and entertainment.

Contextualizing *Ark Encounter* as one of more than 200 sites in the United States that seek to convert you by way of entertainment, with another 200 or more around the world, Bielo theorizes its significance by considering the valence

of symbols, the processes of history making, the sway of capitalist aesthetics and devotional consumption, and the meaning and impact of immersive play. He also expands on the work of Susan Harding by invoking the idea of a “walking poetics of faith” (140), that is, the way in which visitors to Ark Encounter are “asked to participate in the experiential choreography, fill the intertextual gaps between literal scriptural history and the creative team’s artistic imagination, and reconcile what secular skeptics dismiss as irrevocable scientific problems” (143). Indeed, Bielo’s work is in many ways a companion to Harding’s influential exploration of fundamentalist language in *The Book of Jerry Falwell* and Tanya Luhrmann’s analysis in *When God Talks Back* of the practices evangelicals use when training their imaginations to hear the voice of God. Bielo sees these two works, along with his, as complementary ways to understand how contemporary American Christians address what he considers to be the central problem of Christian authenticity: no Christians alive today were present at the origins of their faith, and so work must be done to substantiate the plausibility of the account.

As he closes his text, Bielo argues for the early 19th-century passing of a doxic moment when biblical accounts of creation were all that was available to Westerners seeking to understand their origins. Today, he posits, we live in a world in which science is the orthodox and creationism the heterodox account; consequently, the publicity of fundamentalist Christianity in sites such as Ark Encounter must be analyzed through a frame of outsider or underdog. The design team, he shows us, frets constantly about the site looking cheesy, firmly convinced that one key to converting skeptical visitors who have come to gawk rather than revere is ensuring that the ark and its exhibitions meet Hollywood standards of production.

Yet perhaps Bielo underestimates the broader discursive power of Christianity. What other claims of a similar nature—claims that run so completely counter to everything we know about how the world works—are entertained so seriously and so politely in American life? How much time and money have taxpayers spent in the courts to ensure that publicly funded educational institutions teach mainstream science? In which other affluent nation do none of the leading figures of a major political party proclaim themselves outright evolutionists, as was the case among the 2016 Republican primary candidates? Perhaps creationism’s apparent oddball status sustains or manifests the more far-reaching doxic power of American Christianity.

Another interesting question Bielo’s text raises concerns the arguably wide-ranging fetishization of experience in America today. *Ark Encounter’s* critical examination of how materializing the Bible works and why creationists are attracted to its promises exceeds the subject at hand to offer insight into a more general and arguably more naive American confidence in the meaningful and transformative nature of experience. Across the country, colleges and

universities market themselves to students by touting the number of internships and service trips they offer, promising educational experiences superior to and more effective than classroom book learning. Churches offer hunger banquets so congregants can “really” understand food insecurity. And domestic violence shelters fund-raise by inviting men to don a pair of high heels and “walk a mile in her shoes.”

*Ark Encounter* is a wonderful book. Written in a straightforward and lively manner accessible to undergraduates, it is also theoretically rich enough to make it compelling reading for scholars of religion, public culture, museums, and American studies. Because each chapter deals with a discrete aspect of Ark Encounter’s project and engages different bodies of literature, it is ideal for classroom use. Indeed, it has even prompted me to investigate a field trip to Williamstown. After having students read the text, I want them to be able to experience Ark Encounter firsthand.

**Addicted to Christ: Remaking Men in Puerto Rican Pentecostal Drug Ministries.** *Helena Hansen.* Oakland: University of California Press, 2018. 228 pp.

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The United States has recently seen an upsurge in opioid addiction, most significantly among middle-class whites. Whites have always had high rates of addiction, but the face of addiction and the target of prosecution—rather than redemption—have been the poor, particularly African Americans and Latinos. While white addicts are portrayed as victims to be saved, African American and Latino addicts continue to be marked as moral and social failures who perpetrate crime and threaten society and therefore deserve to be punished.

This new emphasis on compassion and salvation can be witnessed daily in various media format, such as public-service announcements, articles, and films that feature only white addicts and their families. Yet the emphasis on salvation is traceable to religious groups that have, for decades, worked with poor Latino and African American addicts in prisons and inner cities throughout the Americas. In her ethnographic research into addiction treatment via Pentecostal methods of transformation, Helena Hansen explores the growth of Pentecostalism in Puerto Rico, particularly, and the use of its particular beliefs, protocols, and rituals in addiction treatment. Trained in both medicine and anthropology, Hansen brings an especially nuanced and balanced eye to the subject, comparing and contrasting the disparate methods of social science, religion, and medicine to weave a

complex yet comprehensible ethnographic work that is not only thoughtful but fascinating and accessible, in the best sense of the term.

Hansen carefully explicates the important distinction that Pentecostals make between Catholics and Christians. Contrasting themselves to traditional Catholics, whom they see as corrupt and tolerant of undisciplined behaviors such as drinking, Pentecostals encourage control. Addicts who wish to undergo treatment must convert to Pentecostalism, and the Pentecostal community helps former addicts create new kinship relations, severing old ties with people or places that might lead to relapses and fostering communities of spiritual excellence. These groups offer new, welcoming, and exclusionary communities where addicts follow uncompromising rules, allowing those who adapt to feel safe and protected, yet serving as strict arbiters of social control. Such support has contributed to the growth of Pentecostalism in Catholic countries. The hope Pentecostals offer is contrasted with what they consider to be the failed system that most converts grew up in. Readily available support enables addicts to begin treatment quickly and without the high monetary cost of private treatment, and although many newcomers enter via the legal system, a number volunteer at the behest of their families.

One contrast made between the Catholic-dominated culture of Puerto Rico and the Pentecostal approach is through work with battered women, themselves often in relationships with addicts. Pentecostals seek to undermine the culture of machismo: women in abusive relationships are compared to addicts, given support for finding freedom through Pentecostalism, and encouraged to seek healthier partners if their men refuse rehabilitation. Men, on the other hand, are advised that the wife is boss and that they are the workers. Violence is defined not only as physical assault but as other forms of emotional coercion, such as expecting women to act as domestic servants. Nevertheless, patriarchy remains, with men seen as heads of household and providers despite minimalizing conflict, sharing domestic labor, and allowing women a level of autonomy. Still, Pentecostalism offers relief from the more constricting systems that dominated Puerto Rican life for centuries.

Hansen also looks closely at the important distinctions between medical and religious approaches to addiction, noting that while medicine sees the addict as a flawed body whose cravings are best controlled with medications, Pentecostals see addiction not as a permanent state only to be controlled via substitute drugs but as an opportunity for a spiritual transition—from sinner to saved. Techniques of linguistic transformation common in talk therapies and other forms of treatment are also employed to further help those in transition distance themselves from their pasts. Specialized uses of common terms are promoted: addiction is no longer the problem, sin is. Familial terms are also used

in the ministry, which itself becomes the *familia espiritual*, the spiritual family. Colleagues, both peers and superiors, are referred to as *hermanos* and *hermanas*, brothers and sisters, and so on.

Pentecostals seek not only to alter the outer world, from the language that addicts use to the people they associate with, but to transform addicts into morally superior beings in control of their own bodies and minds and capable of saving others through spiritual power and gifts of grace. Incorporating religion and kinship roles into uplift peer counseling, these methods allow for something that humans seem to crave: the ability not only to make ourselves over, but to transform ourselves into enlightened and better beings.

Pentecostals are not the first to promote transformation via discipline and fictive kinships that reinforce connections to the ministries. The work of members of the Nation of Islam in prisons and impoverished neighborhoods, which began in the 1930s and gained momentum during the 1960s and 1970s, when African American and Latino communities were being inundated with drugs, is particularly notable. They also created idealized roles for men and women as well as strong replacement kinship groups via beliefs and strictly disciplined behaviors and rituals that set them apart from their unenlightened lost neighbors and peers, moving them from imagined communities to fully realized sites of actualization. In both cases, adherence to strict codes of conduct, dress, and speech; ministerial community bonding; and idealized gender and family roles are emphasized and create bonds of support and obligation that replace destructive patterns and relationships.

What Hansen does in *Addicted to Christ* is to look inside those processes and connect them powerfully with individual examples, allowing us to follow the path from addiction to freedom as experienced by those in treatment and transition as well as to analyze the process. She is an engaging writer who incorporates both social and medical histories of addiction treatment with clearly focused psychological insights into how ideas about masculinity are centered and managed in the course of transformation.

**Dreams Made Small: The Education of Papuan Highlanders in Indonesia.** Jenny Munro. New York: Berghahn, 2018. 216 pp.

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**JACQUETTA HILL**

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Jenny Munro begins her ethnography of educational aspirations and actual educational experiences of the indigenous Dani people of West Papua's central highlands with

an introductory chapter that sets out a theory of racialization in the academy that hardens the dreams of undergraduate students into resistance. That theme threads through her dense ethnographic accounts of mountain Dani village school life and Dani university life at a distant island in the vast archipelago that makes up Indonesia.

Munro's ethnography, based on fieldwork from October 2005 to December 2006, follows a cohort of Dani university students in their late teens to early 20s. She lived with Dani students in their campus dormitory in Manado, North Sulawesi, for seven months, went to their home in remote West Papua for two months, staying with a family on the outskirts of Wamena, then returned to campus to live in a different dorm that included not only Dani but also other Indonesian students until the end of December 2006. She engaged in full participant-observation of the events, places, and social relationships that make up university life in Manado among Dani and other Indonesian students. In 2009, she went back to Wamena for a follow-up visit to the students.

Munro says that "the broader project of education [in North Sulawesi] is deeply entangled in cultural and political agendas" (54). The educational dreams of Dani were born in Wamena, as Munro found during her stay in their mountain fastness. She discovered that what gave rise to their expectations were dreams of meeting with more cosmopolitan Indonesians, developing modern skills and qualities, and being treated as equals admitted to the elite category of university students, from whence they would come into their own power. Unfortunately, the educational system in North Sulawesi is not implemented in ways that fulfill these dreams. A good map quickly conveys the enormity of the journey that Dani undertake to attend a respected university managed by Christian Indonesians and well supported by white Christian residents of the same locales. It is safe, not a stronghold of the Muslim Indonesians who run the country and maintain a policy of militant action against Dani and other Papuans for any presumed action toward separation.

This geographic look also helps explain why Dani students are so poor. They quickly spend any financial support they bring with them. Their relatives in Wamena are not rich and earn their income primarily through gardens by growing sweet potatoes and cassavas and selling them locally. Discretionary funds are difficult to come by, and sending money the long distance to their Dani students presents a challenge. Students are on their own financially for much of their university studies. They themselves must garden along streams near the university for their own food and for produce to sell. But this public gardening and the poverty of their housing and clothing mark them

indelibly in the eyes of onlooking Indonesians as highland primitives.

In that context, learning Indonesian is symbolic, says Munro, of a particular commitment to modernity alongside formal education more generally. Highlanders' acquisition of standard Indonesian signals their desire for progress, yet imperfect Indonesian among Dani offers other Indonesians an opportunity to "link language skills to alleged poor intellect and racial inferiority" (112). Such negative criticism is not put upon those Indonesians from elsewhere in the archipelago who might similarly lack fluency. This is just one example of the insidious racialization of Dani nonconformity emergent in Dani daily living among other Indonesians. However, Munro does not provide any description of the university's claims or policies regarding its intended human development of its students or projected futures of its graduates.

The petty bureaucratic insults of having to pay fees to have papers graded, to finish coursework, and to schedule tests and final exams often delay completion of courses and majors and even graduation itself. University students are compelled to pay instructors to read their work and submit their grades on time. They pay fees to schedule required exams and to have courses passed and academic programs completed recorded in a timely way. Occasionally, fees are expected for assigning better grades. These practices bring disappointment and disillusionment with the educational institution that Dani work so hard and sacrifice so much to attend.

Munro found attending church services to be an important research source, for here she observed Dani students' interactions with other Indonesians and came to better understand Dani conceptions of their interethnic relationships. Her participation with student organizations, as revealed in her accounts of events and personal relationships among Papuans and between Dani and non-Papuan students, deepens her ethnography. This rich tapestry of student life is threaded with relationships of stigma, leading to Munro's signal insight into the formation of Dani emotional defenses and to her conclusion that educational institutions designed to promote national unity fail to generate loyalty or a sense of membership in the nation when social contexts are settings for denigration and humiliation. Instead, such institutions engender a firm spirit of defiance and resistance that intensifies the students' commitments to the ways of their background communities and to a better distinctive future for those communities. Well written and accessible to undergraduate readers, *Dreams Made Small* also has much to offer advanced researchers in education, anthropology, and related disciplines.

**Gender, Justice, and the Problem of Culture: From Customary Law to Human Rights in Tanzania.** Dorothy L. Hodgson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. 204 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12770

**PAULINE E. PETERS**

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Dorothy Hodgson poses significant questions about the global mantra that women's rights are human rights. She asks, for example, why have legal institutions and individual rights become the dominant mode for seeking justice? What are the pros and cons of privileging the formal legal system over customary justice mechanisms? Whose claims are framed as rights, and who decides which rights have priority? Exploring these questions through a case study of Maasai in Tanzania from the colonial to the present time, Hodgson reviews the historically contingent relationship between law and culture, including why they are often assumed to be opposed, and asks why "culture" [is] invoked in debates about women's rights but not in other discourses of rights" (4). She discusses the ways in which ideas about gender, class, race, and ethnicity have shaped these discourses and practices of women's human rights and emphasizes the role of power and politics in the legal practices, regulations, and interventions directed to "some of the most intimate aspects of people's lives in the name of 'justice'" (5).

In each of four central chapters, Hodgson examines a particular case, event, or issue: first, the colonial construction of customary law, especially as directed toward marriage, contrasted with the Maasai system of justice; second, the contradictions for disputes involving women across multiple legal regimes in the postcolonial era; third, the political dynamics of contemporary feminist organizations led by elite Tanzanian women who use discourses of women's rights and gender-based violence to criminalize certain cultural practices, whereas community members seek redress for quite different problems; and fourth, the "ideas of justice, morality, and personhood" (16) revealed in recent collective protests by Maasai women that are fundamentally different from human rights approaches. In her brief introduction, she situates and summarizes the book's arguments, while her concluding chapter points to the book's contributions to the study of gender, law, and justice.

Oral histories, archives, and other written accounts reveal how the colonial construction of law, considered inherently superior to custom, created a more centralized and hierarchical structure of dispute settlement that privileged a few older men over women and younger men. This ignored the embodiment of Maasai "idioms of justice" (21)

in social relations and specific contexts as well as the many ways that women, especially in ritualized collective action (*olkishoroto*), enforced certain social and moral sanctions. Despite the low rate of use of the new customary courts, certain legacies of this era, including assumptions about gender and culture, helped shape postindependence legal interventions. Relationships categorized as marriage were differently defined and practiced by Maasai compared with colonial and postcolonial authorities. Culturally managed forms of intimacy between young girls and young men combined with bridewealth-based unions of young women to older men were considered immoral by colonial and later regimes as well as by Christian groups, producing conflicts among Maasai as well as between them and government authorities. A detailed case of a Maasai daughter accusing her father in court of forcing her into a marriage against her will reveals the shifts in how marriage plays out in the face of disagreements not only between national law and local practices but also among Maasai by gender and age and, critically, in a context of increasing socioeconomic deprivation and class inequality.

In the chapter titled "Criminalizing Culture," Hodgson takes campaigns against female genital mutilation as a stark illustration of the gap with respect to priorities for action and redress between, on the one hand, elite women's organizations and donors and, on the other hand, Maasai women activists and rural women. Female circumcision, as a part of initiation, was first condemned by foreign and then by elite Tanzanian women as an attack on women's health that was later reframed as an abuse of women's rights and renamed mutilation. In contrast, Maasai women activists and rural women have quite different priorities, seeing not culture as the problem but a problem of power in which foreign and elite Tanzanian activists feel entitled to decide what rural women need, while the latter want to reverse the lack of education and health services and the severely declining income and socioeconomic opportunities. All these are "historical product[s] of colonialism, missionary evangelization" along with the detrimental effects of structural adjustment policies and the accelerating "privatization of their land" (124).

Rural Maasai women are far from conservative or reactionary, as often portrayed by outsiders. On the contrary, they energetically seek to redress the problems facing their entire society, including taking direct and public action. In 2010, thousands of women marched to a district party headquarters to return their party cards as a rejection of the government's pervasive (and often violent) expropriation of their land for safari companies and other uses, which is a major cause of their fast-decreasing ability to maintain their families. In addition to Maasai women's customary mode of collective action, the newer Maasai activist women's organizations, unlike the national mainstream women's



organizations, fight for the broader social, political, and economic justice denied to many Maasai. Hodgson emphasizes how such collective action contrasts with rights-based regimes, predicated as it is on a combination of secular and sacred concerns rather than a solely secular legal base and on “the value of social . . . relationships rather than individual autonomy and rights” (149).

The brief conclusion brings some of these struggles over land expropriation up to date. More generally, it provides eloquent summary arguments about law, culture, rights, gender, and their often problematic interactions and contradictions that, in combination with the other chapters, make this book an excellent addition to scholarship and courses on gender, human rights, legal anthropology, critical development studies, and more.

**Arab Family Studies: Critical Reviews.** *Suad Joseph*, ed. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2018. 640 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12771

**ROSE WELLMAN**

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*Arab Family Studies* is a much-needed critical review of the scholarly literature on Arab families. The book not only provides a country-by-country overview of the research on Arab families but makes a vital argument for the centrality of the family in the region. As the volume’s editor, Suad Joseph, writes, “family remains the most powerful social idiom throughout the Arab region” (1) and “the production of families in the Arab region is foundational to the production of Arab societies” (3). The volume is a unique exploration of how families in the Arab world are shaping and being shaped by economies, labor forces, political realities, market conditions, social reforms, social movements, and global transformations. It shows that family is inextricably tied to state making, power, and policy, and it identifies unanswered questions for future research.

To cover the Arab world is a Herculean task, and the book is massive. Seventeen chapters offer country-by-country reviews (two chapters cover more than one country), and seven more focus on thematic issues. The chapters on specific countries detail the scholarship on the family in North Africa, including Algeria (Marnia Lazreg), Egypt (Nefissa Naguib), Libya (Anna Baldinetti), Morocco (Zakia Salime), Tunisia (Lamia Benyoussef), Sudan (Balghis Badri and Hwiada AbuBaker), and Somalia (Cawo Mohamed Abdi). They also review the Eastern Arab states: Iraq (Nadje Al-Ali), Lebanon (Zeina Zaatari), Syria (Dawn Chatty), Palestine (Islah Jad), and Jordan (Seteney Shami). And they focus on the Arab Gulf: Saudi Arabia (May Al-Dabbagh and Ghalia Gargani), Yemen (Susanne Dahlgren), Kuwait (Ereny

Zarif and Helen Rizzo), the United Arab Emirates and Oman (Rima Sabban), and Bahrain and Qatar (Rima Sabban).

The thematic chapters cover critical issues in Arab family studies such as the centrality of Islamic family law in the region (Judith Tucker), fertility, masculinity, and demography (Marcia Inhorn), and the intersections of education, war, and media (Penny Johnson). Other key chapters address issues of schooling, gender, and education (Fida Adely and Michael Hendrix), the shift from acculturation paradigms to feminist intersectionality paradigms in research on Arab Americans (Nadine Suleiman Naber), families and social media (Linda Herrera), and the relationship between families and migration (Paul Tabar).

Two main themes stand out. The first is a critique of essentialism in the historical study of Arab families. For instance, many of the volume’s authors problematize the colonialist labeling of families as “traditional” or “modern” and critique the very assumption that there is such a thing as a unified “Arab family.” Relatedly, several authors decry the essentialist opposition of the “tribal, patriarchal, patrilineal Arab family” and “the Western or European family,” wherein the “Arab family” is a never-changing, othering prototype. They call for postcolonial feminist approaches to families in the Arab world and a more nuanced analysis of the historical and political conditions through which particular concepts of family and gender are produced in particular historical and political situations. The result of this feminist, nonessentialist perspective is an increased attention to how Arab families are constituted by multiple and shifting forces of power and oppression, including but not limited to capitalism, postcolonialism, nationalism, race, and class.

The second major theme of the volume is change. How have families and the discourses surrounding families been shaped by societal change? How have they been restructured according to evolving local and international discourses variously framed as religious, cultural, or medical? And how have scholarly approaches to such families similarly shifted according to historical events, theories of modernization, and other trends in research? For instance, Nadje Al-Ali argues that knowledge production in and about Iraq is deeply entangled with its tumultuous history, including years of authoritarian rule, comprehensive sanctions, war, occupation, increasing sectarian tensions, and an ongoing lack of security. She calls for ethnographic research that explores how family relationships are linked to changing economic, social, and political systems. Indeed, many of the volume’s authors express the need for a renewal of ethnographic, intensive, and microscale studies of family to clarify the development of concepts, attend more closely to history, and consider how family intersects with state making, religion, law, technology, and citizenship.

*Arab Family Studies* also offers a multitude of unanswered questions for further research, many of which are compiled by Suad Joseph in the concluding chapter. What,

for instance, is the role of families in state power, and how does the state influence and shape those same families? How are Islamic movements trying to reform families, and how do laypeople understand the relationships among family structures, powers, and authorities? How are laws changing so that women can pass citizenship on to their children or not, and how do these changes affect migration? What is more, how are Arab states using women (and their families) as markers of their international platforms? Key here are investigations that document how women themselves are navigating these processes, pitfalls, and opportunities. Another key area of further research is the impact of state violence, war, and displacement on families and children. Given the enormous regional destabilization of the populations of Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Sudan as well as the effects of this on Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Turkey, research is needed on the violent disruption of family structures and on possible futures and policy planning for these fractured families. Finally, the volume raises key questions about families and technology (e.g., social media). What aspects of family are enabled or marginalized by technology and online media platforms in contexts of migration, war, and economic insecurity?

*Arab Family Studies* is a wonderful resource for scholars pursuing research in the Middle East and North Africa as well as those who want to understand the persistent life of kinship in modernity more broadly. As a scholar not only of the Middle East but also of kinship, I can imagine the intriguing ways that the authors of this volume and its readers might join this work with feminist analyses of kinship and relatedness to consider the myriad ways that kinship may be constituted and demarcated in the Arab world in and beyond blood or genealogy, as well as the cultural and social entanglements of kinship and economics and kinship and politics. How might our understandings of Arab families further sharpen if we conceive of families in the region—as we now conceive of gender—not only as a priori givens (whether by God, genealogy, or nature) but also as units in the (un)making, embedded in local values and cultural practices and formed through past and present experiences?

**Women's Place in the Andes: Engaging Decolonial Feminist Anthropology.** Florence E. Babb. Oakland: University of California Press, 2018. 298 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12772

**KATHLEEN S. FINE-DARE**

Fort Lewis College

In this rich and important book, we learn how Florence Babb has conjoined ethnographic, theoretical,

autobiographical, ethical, and practical approaches to the study of women over the course of anthropological research she has carried out in Peru since the 1970s, right when the anthropology of women and gender was taking off. Although the book has much general value as a historically grounded journey through the landscape of feminist research in Latin America—especially regarding the question of whether indigenous women's position should be viewed as equal to or at least complementary to that of men before colonialism—the corpus of work ultimately centers on the kinds of positionings—generational, professorial, investigatory, and those of genuine friendship—that led Babb to rethink her own significant and highly cited contributions to Andean feminist research by reconsidering commentaries made on her work by others over the years.

At once kaleidoscopic, reflexive, candid, and prescriptive, *Women's Place in the Andes* (which readers should be advised does not cover the Andean region much beyond Peru) is part memoir, part reprint of classic publications, and part collection of new, separately themed essays. What emerges is a fresh take on Babb's work over four decades that has influenced at least two generations of feminist anthropologists. The primary goal—to bring deeper and better-informed understandings of the ways that change has affected Andean women's quality of life, sense of empowerment, and ability to thrive without fear of violence, poverty, and precarity—is addressed via new insights that Babb gained from recent ethnographic and archival research, reflection upon recent scholarship from Global North and Global South intellectuals and activists, and reexamination of six previously published pieces from 1985 to 2012.

Three new commentaries respectively address each section of the book. In part 1, "Gender and Rural Development," Babb focuses on a 1985 article (and its republication in Spanish in 1999) based on work she began in the 1970s about gender relations in Vicos, the former estate-community that became the famous applied anthropological Cornell-Peru Project that ran from 1951 to 1962. The 1985 piece received criticism as Babb argued that, expectations to the contrary, women's conditions did not materially improve as a result of the "modern" work arrangements and ideas introduced by project personnel, which included providing literacy classes and voting rights to women even as women's productive activities were replaced with "still more (reproductive) domestic responsibility" (53). Mostly, the Cornell-Peru Project did not address women's conditions or those of the older men who were the traditional leaders, which makes Babb's work pioneering as a rural-focused feminist study that in many ways presaged decolonizing studies conducted by her and others into the 1990s and beyond.

Part 2, "Gender and the Urban Informal Economy," reflects on one 1984 article and two book chapters (from 1986

and 2001) centered on Babb's longitudinal ethnographic work in Huaraz, Peru. Although these pieces focus principally on market women's activities, Babb comments that by the late 1980s her political-economic framework began to include more cultural, symbolic, and bodily focused information regarding women's experiences, some of which was influenced by postcolonial scholarship and women's political movements.

The third part of the book—which centers on the relationship of gender to work, tourism, and cultural identity—features pieces from 1990 and 2012 that raised some controversy. The entirety of this part will be useful for both younger and older scholars as they consider ways that sexism in the academy has (or hasn't) changed since Babb confronted Marxists who would not accept gender as an essential element of class analysis or acknowledge the pushback that can come from suggesting that Andean women know what they're doing when they choose to participate in a tourist economy. Although sometimes criticized for giving in to capitalism, Andean women have been able to find new niches in the marketplace not only by selling beautiful objects but also by engaging in the commerce of transnational imaginaries and expectations. And this multiplex agency reminds us that “women” is indeed a plural category that defies dualism and other reductions in meaning.

As focused as the book is on decolonization and intersectionalism, *Women's Place in the Andes* nonetheless raises some questions. For example, based on this work, do we know enough about the actual views of indigenous, Afro-, transgendered, and other women in the Andes? And what exactly does it mean to identify any work written by a person from a dominant social perspective as decolonized? While Babb gives us some clues throughout the book, I found the discussion a bit muddled by its connection to the *otros saberes* (other knowledges) epistemological-ontological trend.

My questions were clarified somewhat when, in the course of introductory remarks Babb provided at the 2018 AAA meetings in a session highlighting the women-focused research of some of her graduate students at the University of North Carolina, she defined “decolonial” as “more inclusive” and “less culture bound,” emphasizing the work conducted by Latin American women as environmental and political activists and intellectuals as well as her own students' extraordinary field research on feminist political ecology and ontology, cosmopolitics, and decolonization theory. The question remains, however, regarding in what ways these efforts decolonize an arena that is still not only highly dualistic, as Babb addresses in several places in the book, but also hierarchical and grounded in the often exclusionary and competitive workings of an increasingly unaffordable academy.

These questions provoke another regarding the role of Native American, Pacific Islander, and other indigenous

and feminist scholars who have been generating a prodigious amount of writing on indigeneity, women's rights, violence, gender asymmetry, the environment, and ongoing genocide and colonization that nevertheless does not reach the consciousness of as many Latin Americanist scholars as it should. As Babb herself claims, “We need more opportunities for scholar-activists, including indigenous scholar-activists, to come together and engage with some of the most urgent questions that have often divided us, but which, over time, have created a foundation for collaboration and knowledge exchange” (205). *Women's Place in the Andes* is a wonderfully productive step in that direction, highlighting one influential scholar's career, from which we might find inspiration to take ever more productive steps to cross a North-South divide in consideration of indigenous women's realities across the Americas.

**A World of Babies: Imagined Childcare Guides for Eight Societies**, 2nd ed. *Alma Gottlieb and Judy S. DeLoache*, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 386 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12773

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University of South Florida

Babies don't come with manuals. Well, not free ones. But in the United States you can find millions of childcare manuals on everything from attachment parenting and rearing children the French way to taking inspiration from Chinese parental culture to be a tiger mom to navigating how to use the bathroom without the presence of children. What has been dubbed the Parental Industrial Complex has a vast history beginning with one of the first childcare manuals, published in the mid-1800s by Catharine Beecher (even though she did not have children of her own) and later updated and expanded with help from her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe. In the 1910s, the federal government became involved via the Children's Bureau, which issued pamphlets to new and expectant mothers. Arguably the father of the modern Parental Industrial Complex is Dr. Benjamin Spock, whose 1946 *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* is second only to the Bible in number of books sold. As in the first edition of their book, Alma Gottlieb and Judy DeLoache take Spock's childcare manual as a guide, asking, What if Spock and his Parental Industrial Complex descendants were born in a Beng village or a Palestinian refugee camp?

The second edition of *A World of Babies* answers this question in eight new vignettes—seven childcare guides about societies different from those of the first edition and one updated and revised guide about the Beng by Gottlieb.

Each imagined guide begins with a preface about the profiled culture based on ethnographic fieldwork by the actual author that situates the guide's semifictional narrator, who is usually inspired by people in the society in which the author interacted. After an introduction to the narrator, the guide provides specific advice on pregnancy, birth, and rites of passage as well as general advice on how to enculturate a functioning member of that particular society.

The central argument of the book lies at the basic foundation of anthropology. There are certain human universals—pregnancy, birth, and the fact that babies must eat and sleep and are dependent on adults—but the rules that govern these practices of meeting babies' biological needs are far from universal. Instead, they are shaped by historic, economic, political, and social contexts, so that there is no one correct way to rear a child. Further, these practices are not unanimously agreed upon by all members of a culture. To illustrate this point, the editors use the example of where American babies should sleep. Should they cosleep with their parents? Sleep in the same room but in their own bed? Sleep in a different room of the house? Depends on whom you ask.

In a departure from the first edition, all the profiled societies are industrialized, navigating how to care for children against the backdrop of a rapidly changing, neoliberal, and post-9/11 world. Further, the largest proportion of the featured cultures practice Islam—Guinean Muslims in Portugal, Palestinian mothers in the West Bank, and Somali mothers in Minnesota—a conscious decision on the part of the editors to “counter the essentialist Othering that occurs all too easily by non-Muslims” (29).

The book shows how childcare practices are shaped by poverty, conflict, xenophobia, racism, changing cultural norms, and migration. Over the eight chapters, readers learn of the difficulties and confusions around the continuation of the practice of female circumcision among Mandinka migrants to Portugal (Michelle C. Johnson), conflicting generational opinions over whether Chinese mothers should not shower or brush their teeth for a month after giving birth (Erin Raffety), how to explain violent attacks to your Israeli (Deborah Golden) and Palestinian (Bree Akesson) children, the importance of infant protection practices because of poverty-induced high infant mortality rates (Alma Gottlieb), how to maintain traditions in the face of rapid globalization (Kate Feinberg Robins and Mariah G. Schug), and the dangers of being a black male in the United States (Sirad Shiridon).

Although each childcare guide is written from the perspective of a member of a particular culture, the editors caution that it is meant to address not members of that society but outsider Western readers interested in learning about childcare practices in other places. However, given the profiled failings of incorporating cultural competence into Western biomedical cultural birth practices, pregnant

Mandinka women living in Portugal and Somali refugees in Minnesota may want to consult their respective chapters and, if they agree with the cultural practices described within, offer the book to their obstetricians. Some of the chapters more readily lend themselves to the suspension of disbelief required to accept that the manual could have been written by a member of the profiled culture. The chapters by Gottlieb and Raffety make this leap more believable through the use of two narrators—a Beng grandmother and diviner for Gottlieb and a young Chinese mother and her mother-in-law for Raffety. Johnson also does this effectively through the positionality of a woman who emigrated to Portugal several years ago now offering advice to new migrants. Other chapters, like those on Somali refugees living in Minnesota and Faroe Islanders trying to preserve aspects of their culture despite increasing immigration, provide too much explication of the cultural logic underpinning childcare practices and not enough narration from a particular definable person.

This minor pedantic issue should not deter readers from this engaging book. *A World of Babies* is an approachable and creative presentation of ethnographic fieldwork in a compelling way. This makes it ideal for introductory courses in general and cultural anthropology as well as more advanced courses in gender and culture and child development. It may also be of interest to health care professionals working with families from the profiled societies and general readers who wish to learn more about how children in other cultures are reared.

**Being a Sperm Donor: Masculinity, Sexuality, and Biosociality in Denmark.** Sebastian Mohr. Oxford: Berghahn, 2018. 216 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12774

**ANDREA FORD**

University of Chicago

Being a sperm donor is not just about donating semen once or twice a week; it is a process of moral and gendered becoming. Such is Sebastian Mohr's claim in his careful and engaging ethnography. Being a sperm donor in contemporary Denmark is a microcosm of what it means to be a man in a biomedical, biopolitical day and age. The subtleties of mundane experiences of sperm donation reveal how profoundly formative this process of biosocial subjectivation, to use Mohr's term, can be. The routines of donation and the everyday dynamics of sperm banks require men who donate sperm to think of themselves and their social relations in terms of biosociality, which refers to the self and its constituting social relations as being embedded in various biopolitical practices and discourses.

Sperm donation goes against three long-standing Euro-American social taboos: masturbation, infidelity, and multilinear kinship. In addition to the weight of historical stigmatization, masturbation often means that men spend time with pornographic images and the fantasies emerging from these images, which can be perceived as a threat to their real-world sexual partners. Because sperm donation makes children and because of the enabling technologies of DNA testing, men who donate sperm expose themselves and their families to uncertain kinship relations that will persist beyond their lifetimes. Moreover, sperm donation requires donors to submit themselves to uncomfortable biomedical scrutiny and follow an ejaculatory regimen that can interfere with their personal and sexual lives (due to a waiting period of 48 to 72 hours before each donation during which they cannot ejaculate). Yet the multinational enterprise of assistive reproductive technology relies on large numbers of men willingly participating. Why do they do it?

Sperm donation is, according to Mohr, an “enticement of gender” (16) that allows heterosexual men to perform masculinity in ways that make them feel good about themselves (Danish regulations prohibit donations from men who have sex with men). He develops this positive, desirous form of self-making as a way that people create and recognize themselves as normatively gendered in contemporary societies. Mohr uses the term *biosocial subjectivation* to frame this kind of masculine performance in order to critique the academic literature about biosociality, biomedicalization, biopolitics, and biological citizenship that often implies top-down scientific and regulatory control. Yet biological subjectivation involves buy-in from people who use such processes to enhance their capacities and sense of self-worth in meaningful ways. Sperm donation is based on an affective economy that allows donors to make themselves into recognizably virtuous men using situations of biosociality.

The first of the book’s five chapters sets out the conceptual basis for biosocial subjectivation, engaging with the literature mentioned above as well as queer and feminist theory. In the second chapter, Mohr lays out the moral questions that sperm donation raises and how donors negotiate their place as responsible, gendered subjects of a particular moral order. They fulfill the roles of responsible fathers, loving sons, and caring husbands not simply in spite of sperm donation but by using it—for example, by capably managing the sexual expectations of their partners alongside regulations on ejaculation, by taking action to protect their children from unwanted kinship claims, or by honoring deceased parents’ valuation of children.

Chapter 3 delves into the affective investments of sperm donation, focusing on men’s experiences of masturbating at sperm banks. To effectively donate sperm, they

must learn to excite and stimulate themselves in particular ways and contexts, on demand, and as part of an ejaculatory regimen that can last for years (donors are expected to commit to an extended period of regular donation to make the initial intake process worthwhile). They incorporate such control as part of competent gender performance. Chapter 4 untangles how donors think about relatedness and kinship in relation both to their own families and to donation recipients and donor-conceived individuals. Mohr argues that responsibility is key in either case—in the former through protecting their families from unwelcome kinship claims, in the latter by ensuring their own health and honest submission to biomedical regimens. Donors did not consider children conceived using their sperm to be kin, but many did feel obligated beyond maintaining their own health and therefore chose not to be anonymous in case a child eventually wanted to contact them.

The fifth chapter, which I found to be the most interesting, deals with the limits of biosocial subjectivation. Mohr shows how unpleasant affects, namely shame and disgust, mark the boundaries of sperm donation as a way of crafting masculine subjectivity. Opportunities for shame and disgust abound: for example, nude medical examinations including scrutiny of genitals and anus, quantification of reproductive and biomedical health metrics, submission to questions about and control over one’s sexual life, masturbation in a public space and task-oriented manner while being very close to other men’s masturbation and semen. Such moments mark sperm donation’s limits because if the unpleasant experiences become too prominent men will stop donating, yet they also create the conditions for the enticement of gender that motivates men to overcome this unpleasantness in the first place. Shameful limits are what allow succeeding at masculinity to be so rewarding. To be proud of having high sperm counts that may father lots of children requires submitting to testing that may announce reproductive inferiority; to successfully manage competing masculine responsibilities is shadowed by feeling morally incapable while struggling to balance them. Sperm donation is a continuous transgressive experience that has both appealing and off-putting aspects that both reinforce and undermine normative gender performativity.

Mohr’s research involved extensive participant-observation and nearly 30 interviews with men from very different backgrounds involved in sperm donation. His book is full of important reflections on the fieldwork experience: how it implicated his own masculinity and feelings, the effects of interviews from the donors’ perspectives (including how they challenged or reinforced more subtle enticements of gender), and sensory details. Mohr has a refreshingly frank way of exploring the theoretically interesting aspects of masturbation and gendered affects, and frequent quotations from his interviews and field notes lend richness to his somewhat repetitive though

meticulous text. He is careful not to generalize, and he makes use of outliers and opposite tendencies in his findings to emphasize that he is making truth claims not about what sperm donors are but, rather, about the processes in which they must engage. Sperm donation combines technical simplicity with moral complexity, giving it an “(extra)ordinariness” (3) exemplified in how the daily life of donors weaves together gendered, sexual norms of contemporary social life with the transgressive novelties of reproductive biomedicine “in a seemingly unproblematic fashion” (15). This book beautifully captures that paradox.

**Garbage Citizenship: Vital Infrastructures of Labor in Dakar, Senegal.** Rosalind Fredericks. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018. 212 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12775

**DAGNA RAMS**

University of Lausanne

*Garbage Citizenship* is an engaging study of garbage infrastructure in Senegal’s capital that foregrounds both the human labor it takes to keep the city clean and the ways that failures to do so become goads to political action. Among the political actors appearing on the book’s pages are a youth movement that seeks to rid the city of dirt in order to rid the country of moral disorder, a community-based NGO-led waste project that employs local women as part-time waste workers, and a protest organized by the main trash workers’ union. Rosalind Fredericks gives a composite picture of infrastructure as a vital political terrain far greater than the technical expertise that overtly defines it. This is a terrain shaped by poststructural adjustment austerity that led to experimentations with labor conditions and subsequent protests as Dakar’s garbage workers fought for better contracts by emphasizing Islam’s ecological message and forging alliances with residents fed up with government fecklessness.

Infrastructure in African contexts often requires some readjustment of perspectives to understand how its fragmentations are stitched together by residents’ spontaneous solutions. In most neighborhoods in Dakar, there is no regular garbage service. No trucks appear to empty cans on a given day. Denser neighborhoods are hard to access. Most of the waste is organic, which in the tropical climate translates into noxious decomposition. Garbage workers and residents alike engage in what Fredericks calls salvage bricolage to upend the infrastructure’s shortcomings through tinkering with deficient technologies and creating strategies of managing trash despite infrequent disposal. A female homemaker explained to Fredericks what this entails in practice: “On the first day [when the truck is not

coming], we separate out the rice, vegetables, and banana peels and feed these to the goat” (87). But Fredericks and her interlocutors do not settle for the bricolage. Rather, what lies at the heart of the book is an admonishment by a municipal official she interviews: “Yes, infrastructure is power, and what matters most is choosing the *right* infrastructure” (152).

To reveal how much infrastructure is a matter of choice, even in a resource-strapped urban context like Dakar, Fredericks begins by tracing changing governance agendas and their reconfigurations of labor over five decades. She describes the transition from the relatively well-funded infrastructures of the postindependence era to austerity measures after Senegal became one of the first recipients of structural adjustment loans from the World Bank in 1979. The imposed cuts to public spending meant that garbage workers were laid off. In response, a spontaneous youth social movement organized to clean the city of piling garbage left by protesting workers. The Set/Setal (“Be Clean/Make Clean” in Wolof) emerged out of youth sports groups. Young men and women took to cleaning the streets, painted educational murals, and worked to rid neighborhoods of tobacco, alcohol, prostitution, and violence. The youth, Fredericks argues, were actively reshaping their collective identity as a solution to the city’s future rather than as its unemployed problem. Soon after the movement’s creation, the city’s newly elected mayor, Mamadou Diop, channeled this youthful fervor to manage garbage infrastructure at low cost. Former activists now turned into underpaid workers.

For Fredericks, austerity means a reconfiguration of “the relationship between the body, infrastructure, and the city” (62). In neoliberal Dakar, the volunteers turned waste workers had to bear the brunt of the disrepair of the infrastructure on their bodies. As salvage bricoleurs, they operated old vehicles, handled waste without protective gear, and tried to avoid injuries because they received no medical insurance. In addition, the Set/Setal’s discourse of dedication to community work was hijacked by the municipal authorities to organize public infrastructure as if it was a voluntary movement.

As public infrastructure in neoliberal Dakar became more and more underinvested, NGOs stepped in to fill the gaps. Fredericks dedicates a chapter, “Technologies of Community,” to an almost caricature-sounding NGO project that was set up to provide an off-grid, low-tech, neighborhood-based garbage collection system in Dakar’s district of Yoff. The project in question employed women for symbolic wages to collect trash using horse-drawn carts and to police whether community members paid user fees for participating in the system. The choice of women as the appropriate workers naturalized them as solely responsible for household garbage, while their own adherence to the community meant their work could be cast not as labor but as a fulfillment of responsibility for the community. The

women were encouraged to use social capital and powers of persuasion to convince neighbors to pay subscription fees in the program—a duty that sometimes put them in disfavor.

It is after describing the neoliberal excess in redefining notions of responsibility and empowerment and in cutting funding without heed for working bodies that Fredericks turns to trade union organizing. Her final chapter, “The Piety of Refusal,” underlines the salience of spirituality in relation to waste and cleanliness. Senegal is a Muslim-majority country, and its trash workers are no exception. Fredericks aims to show how the labor movement conjured a more expansive Muslim identity and “how Islam may provide the language for constructively contesting neoliberal austerity” (128). Islam was essential to the rhetoric of Madany Sy, the secretary-general of the trash workers’ union. Sy invoked religious identity to frame waste work as pious: “A true Muslim . . . must not be sullied; cleanliness is essential. Thus those who collect the trash of the markets, hospitals, the households, they have a surplus with regard to God” (141). In the context of strikes organized by the union, trash emerged as the putrid, gritty political material that when not tended to by waste workers piles up, smells bad, and threatens disasters, thus adding urgency to labor demands for better conditions.

The book ends on a high note. In 2014, members of the trade union managed to receive a concession to their bargaining for better pay and medical insurance from the municipality. What battles lie ahead is for future researchers to trace, but Fredericks has shown us that garbage infrastructure is a crucial political terrain upon which new understandings of citizenship, collective identity, and solidarity emerge. By employing analytic categories such as salvage bricolage and piety of refusal, she purposefully restores dignity to those whose work is materially and symbolically undervalued. Her narrative is a stark reminder that neoliberalism is not “a global bulldozer wreaking havoc on a passive local victim” (5). It can be resisted and its trajectory reversed.

**Reclaiming the Discarded: Life and Labor on Rio’s Garbage Dump.** *Kathleen M. Millar.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018. 248 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12776

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*Reclaiming the Discarded* is a captivating ethnography of the *catadores* (pickers) who made a living from recyclables in Jardim Gramacho, on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, Latin America’s largest dump until its closure in 2012. The central

question animating Kathleen Millar’s book—why do *catadores* keep going back to the dump?—yields a narrative built around the motivations for becoming *catadores* and their comings and goings, from day-to-day decisions to collect to longer-term departures and returns to their ambivalent engagements with organized cooperatives. Weaving “together life and labor, value and waste, and the city and its margins” (4), the waste workers’ stories are complemented by forays into contextual and conceptual considerations such as shifting waste policies, the history of the *catador* community, and the evolving political economy shaping labor and its conceptualization in the Global South.

The book shines in its problematization of notions of labor, informality, and precarity, with the author skillfully using the unseen labor of *catadores* to reenvision life and livelihood on the global margins of late capitalism. Millar lambasts self-evident explanations that privilege necessity and survival, critiquing tautological definitions of labor that frame “informal” labor negatively and thereby pathologize the poor and deny them political subjectivity and social being. She also questions the utility of understanding them through the notion of the precariat, a transplant from the Global North that obscures local labor histories and specificities and misconstrues the culture of poverty in the South.

Millar observes that the “fixed conditions of waged employment often stand in tension with the uncertainties and disruptions that punctuate life in Rio’s periphery” (71), while precarious work allows for enhanced self-determination and more malleable boundaries among labor, leisure, and family life. Collecting affords a fluidity of income streams and of work and nonwork rhythms that is desirable in a context of fluctuating income needs and social obligations. Notably, however, Millar rejects interpreting the choices of *catadores* as a resistance to wage labor, affirming that resistance “suggests an oppositional stance that does not resonate with the affective register of *catadores*’ returns” (92). Rather, she opts to speak of “a politics of detachment that enables life to be lived in the precarious present” (93), which stresses turning not just away from but toward something, inverting the tendency to theorize the agency of the poor in the negative and imbuing them with dignity and humanity.

An overarching aim of the book is to critique the reification of the economic through unsettling understandings of informality and humanizing notions of the kind of labor often dismissed or bemoaned as marginal. Millar persuasively argues that the division between work and life “has tended to generate separate conversations in the social sciences between issues of political economy on the one hand and those of phenomenology and subjectivity on the other” (11). Speaking of forms of living rather than livelihoods, she understands the activities of *catadores* to be woven within social worlds that do not conform to (and actively unsettle) contrasts between labor and leisure.

This phenomenological tack is greatly enriched by Millar's seductive and productive notion of plasticity—"the quality of changing form" (15)—which emphasizes process, practice, and relationality and—beyond being a cleverly apropos metaphor—does a splendid job of illuminating the lives of *catadores* while serving as a compelling means of theorizing human becoming. Plasticity stresses the production of values, desires, social relations, and materialities as part of a singular dynamic, creative, and relational process, serving as an elegant framework for a nuanced rethinking of various entrenched oppositions (e.g., formal-informal, order-disorder, and power-resistance). Plasticity also calls attention to the dialogical relationship between *catadores* and other actors, accentuating the interplay of forms in the production of the economy and the processes of mimesis and contagion that animate the permeable boundaries of the formal and the informal. It thus serves as a powerful means to unify and articulate an emphasis on forms of living and critiques of the reification of the formal and the economic.

Going against the grain of scholarship on waste pickers, which has privileged recycling cooperatives, Millar focuses on the autonomous *catadores* who comprise the majority of waste workers. This choice not only serves to highlight the lives of the more typical *catadores* and to critique formality-informality dichotomies but enables a thoughtful meditation on ethnographic selectivity and its role in reinforcing assumptions about progressive politics, positive social change, and legitimate forms of resistance. Assumed to lack agency and political consciousness, these purportedly disengaged or apolitical actors are relegated to the shadows of social analysis—or blamed for their poverty—thereby reproducing their marginality. Countering these impulses, Millar repurposes the idea of detachment "not as a negative moment of giving up or giving out, but rather as an affirmative act of returning to the dump" (155), critiquing the tendency to interpret the perceived ephemerality of political organization as indicative of a lack of leadership or "the *capacity* for political organization" (175).

Rethinking work and waste are taken as complementary tasks—with connections made between the ways that informal workers and waste are theorized in the negative—yielding the persuasive argument that reclaiming discarded things "is also an act of remaking the world." Millar thus deftly "illuminates how waste lies at the heart of both relations of inequality and transformative social projects" (33).

Some of the book's most interesting and convincing insights are more timidly affirmed than they could have been. The alluring discussions of plasticity and, especially, "vital liminality" (59) left me wanting more. I also hoped that Millar would leverage her captivating insights into precarity to make loftier critiques about the recycling of inequality under late capitalism and to articulate more ambitious transformative social projects. This occasional theoretical

parsimony is understandable, however, as deepening the book's theoretical engagements would have run the risk of sullyng the author's aim to reclaim the discarded, which she effectively achieves precisely through letting her humanistic storytelling remain in the foreground. The end result is a thought-provoking and pleasurable read that will be of value to scholars and students with an interest in Brazil and Latin America, economic anthropology, globalization, and urban anthropology.

**Two Lenins: A Brief Anthropology of Time.** Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov. Chicago: Hau Books, 2017. 168 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12777

**MARJORIE MANDELSTAM BALZER**

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After a 2017 American Anthropological Association session featuring Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov, I discussed this book's premises with two of his former Cambridge University students. They concluded he had been typically eloquent yet hard to follow, due to his being a "big-tent analyst" citing eclectic sources. I argue here that he is not big tent enough in this "brief anthropology of time," but he is certainly provocative.

It is difficult to summarize this challenging monograph in Hau Books' prestigious series intended to update Bronislaw Malinowski's foundational efforts. Ssorin-Chaikov's book builds on two contrasting previously published projects: one based on his fieldwork in Siberia with Indigenous Evenki reindeer herders, the other from his work co-curating the 2006 exhibition *Gifts to Soviet Leaders* in Moscow's Kremlin Museum. His clever title, *Two Lenins*, is a playful juxtaposition of the historical Lenin in the revolutionary era and an Evenki herder nicknamed Lenin, who was in his prime when Ssorin-Chaikov lived with the Evenki in the Soviet period and who proclaimed himself a contemporary Evenki. By the early post-Soviet period, this self-assessment was cruelly disputed by a local Russian Communist Party official turned director of a disintegrating collective farm, who saw the Evenki Lenin as a retrograde, primitive, and ignorant Native prone to steal farm fodder from the state. Perception, timing, and context matter, explains Ssorin-Chaikov, who managed to stay friendly with both men.

Ssorin-Chaikov claims that his book is as much about methodology as it is about various theories of time. In one of his best passages, he explains how he broke uneven matchsticks to recall conversations with herders while repairing fences away from his notebook. He and Olga Sosnina also culled rich data from comments on their exhibition, rendering early Soviet period gifting legible to



current post-Soviet, sometimes nostalgic Russians suffering degrees of agony over the disintegration of their social security-oriented world-power state. I would have appreciated more on how Ssorin-Chaikov originally chose (or was assigned?) the Evenki herders he came to know first as a Soviet period student and later as a post-Soviet Berkeley PhD scholar in anthropology. He could also have better clarified how and why he came to curate the Kremlin exhibit. Is this a book born of the happenstance of different kinds of ethnographic experience and timing?

Retrospective and prospective time are eye-of-the-beholder phenomena, and Ssorin-Chaikov nods toward reflexive, phenomenological approaches. More directly, he tries to integrate the perspectives of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Johannes Fabian, Thomas Hobbes, Marcel Mauss, Pitirim Sorokin, Robert Merton, and Alfred Gell, to name a few of the diverse theorists he features. He adapts Laura Bear, who encouraged him to write this book, and relies heavily on Nancy Munn's 1992 review article on the cultural anthropology of time. The works of Henri Bergson, Anthony Giddens, Tom Boellstorff, Akhil Gupta, and James Ferguson are unevenly woven into an argument stressing Munn's insight that "sociocultural systems do not simply go on *in* or *through* time but *are* themselves time" (122). This has serious ramifications for modernity theory and for changing, usually shortening, periodizations of history in various sociocultural contexts. Here it would have been appropriate to dissect issues of path dependency. Ssorin-Chaikov compares Reinhart Koselleck's theories with those of Anna Tsing and Arjun Appadurai on globalization as it interacts with various levels of the local. But how can one discuss Koselleck's "open futures" and the importance of new, emerged forms in anthropology debates without engaging Michael M. J. Fischer and recent Anthropocene scholarship? How can an analyst of Russia mention nostalgia without acknowledging its master theorist Svetlana Boym?

A major component of Ssorin-Chaikov's theorizing revolves around the productive anthropology of gifting, but I fear it is a recycled gift in new wrapping. Discussing science and objectivity through James Clifford, Donna Haraway, and Tim Ingold, Ssorin-Chaikov builds a familiar case that "constructivism is not merely Cartesian . . . but creationist" (93). On the dubious gifts of empire, he cites Ann Stoler's brilliant warning that empires traffic in "promissory notes" (99), much as planned and naively endorsed Soviet "culture bases"—model settlements in Siberia—did. The negatives of Soviet power, a special kind of empire, are mentioned without giving credit to Native theorists on settler states, such as Kyle Powys Whyte. The "gifts" of civilization brought to Indigenous peoples of Siberia and elsewhere have long been seen, especially by Indigenous ethnographers such as Olga Ulturgasheva, as unfinished at best, haunting at worst. My work on colonization, Christianization, Sovietization, and neocolonialization in Siberia has analyzed these

painful processes of incompleteness as often resulting in accretions of unevenly backfiring resentment. Ssorin-Chaikov mentions ingratitude, but mostly in the context of post-Soviet authorities complaining about dense, unappreciative Natives. While Ssorin-Chaikov convincingly views Sovietization as a "Hobbesian gift . . . a form of conquest and entrapment" (129), he does not grapple fully with its devastation and with Indigenous resilience. Vaunted education and electrification (symbolized on his book's cover) hardly make up for the bloodshed and injustices of the Soviet period.

Anthropology builds on comparative dialogues, if not dialectics, among scholars experienced in similar geographical and sociopolitical contexts. It is therefore strange that Ssorin-Chaikov cites Bruce Grant and Alexei Yurchak without Serguei Oushakine and Ernest Gellner, especially since he contrasts reductive Western and Soviet approaches in ways eerily similar to Gellner's. Odder still, he fails to acknowledge many of his Western and often disproportionately female ethnographer colleagues in Siberian studies, such as (in alphabetical order) David Anderson, Anya Bernstein, Alexia Bloch, Gail Fondahl, Patty Gray, Eric Kasten, Anna Kerttula, Alexander King, Caroline Humphrey, Alexandra Lavrillier, Gail Osherenko, Petra Rethmann, Florian Stammler, Piers Vitebsky, Jarrett Zigon, and others.

To paraphrase Trotsky, should Lenin be relegated to the dustbin of history? Have I wasted my time with this book? No, because it has stimulated me to think more about why the anthropology of time is so slippery.

**Disappointment: Toward a Critical Hermeneutics of Worldbuilding.** Jarrett Zigon. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018. 208 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12778

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In *Disappointment*, anthropology has perhaps never looked more philosophical, as Jarrett Zigon's Heideggerian influences shape what should become a major text for anyone preoccupied with the relationships among ontology, ethics, and morality. It is through a critical phenomenology of these domains that Zigon turns his gaze toward the political, more specifically toward the disappointment-cum-paralysis that, in his eyes, constitutes the rights-based politics of our times. In response, he offers an alternative political framework for being in the world with others. If there is to be any chance of a future, he contends, we need to pull up the roots of the politics that we know and begin instead from what we don't know—what he frames as a politics of becoming.

The first two chapters are concerned with diagnosing the rights-based form of the modern political subject, the politics of the *a priori*. Zigon's key methodology is critical hermeneutics—a theoretical analytic that looks first to unground that which is already given—that is, the politics of the *a priori*—and then to operationalize this ungrounding as the catalyst to disclose and open up new possibilities for becoming (through thinking) otherwise. He does this via a critical history lesson in human rights discourse that begins with intrachurch debates about whether to ameliorate poverty, moves to arguments about slavery and colonialism, and continues right through to the modern human rights industry. Zigon contends that the trajectory of this arc is defined by a metaphysical shift that saw the bounded individual become the primary vector of rights and, by extension, sovereign power. Enshrining the individual's *a priori* rights into law thus saw metaphysical humanism institutionalized as a kind of politico-moral order that protected above all the capacity of the individual subject to actively project itself onto (and thus potentially lay claim to) the material world—a projection that the equally bounded nation-state has, like a matryoshka doll, continued to protect and mirror.

So dominant is this model of being that even those who challenge the sociopolitical status quo are forced to use the language of rights to frame their struggle. Drawing on his fieldwork among HIV harm reduction advocates in Russia, Zigon describes how these activists evoke the biopolitical language of rights and dignity to demand legislation aimed at “protecting” the individual health and rights of the drug user and, by extension, the socioeconomic health of the Russian nation-state. What this legislation actually does is invite the nation-state, via biopolitical therapeutics and surveillance, deeper into the daily lives of an already excluded group, making them seemingly responsible for their health while opening them up to further police abuse and incarceration. In this way, these “progressive” adjustments end up reproducing, with a few minor legislative tweaks, the same rights-centered political conditions that fanned the flames of the heroin-fueled HIV epidemic in the first place, in the process foreclosing any possibilities for drug users to experiment with alternative ways of being.

One such alternative form of political activity is what Zigon calls the politics of worldbuilding. Such a politics emerges from situations that have rendered existence unbearable, such as the drug war. A situation, in his terms, is the temporary and local manifestation of diffuse but interlocking global assemblages—biopolitical therapeutics, carceral economics, and global militarism, in the case of the drug war—that create the shared conditions of existence people find themselves caught up in. Because human existence is relationally constituted, situations assemble together to form worlds. Changing your world, then, means changing your situation—a multiscalar

process that involves creative experimentation with new situational worlds by organized, ethically motivated actors across multiple open-ended fronts.

Zigon devotes a chapter to showing us what such a world looks like. Through macroscale political imaginings set into local motion by those committed to the openness of yet-unknown worlds, Vancouver's Downtown Eastside became transformed from an overdose-HIV killing field into a neighborhood where addicts can now live in something like existential (though by no means utopian) comfort among people of the larger community. One example is the Downtown bank, whose teller is not just an agent in a financial transaction but someone who can put drug users in touch with counseling and detox services, whose lobby is flanked not by security guards to keep the riffraff at bay but by a clearing (a space of openness and possibility, in the Heideggerian sense) complete with a crack pipe vending machine, where people can attune themselves to the social and political life of the neighborhood—the world—in which they all share a stake. Emerging simultaneously are businesses that employ active drug users while providing flexible working conditions that align with their particular ways of being. There are studios and exhibition spaces where users can create works of art and share them with the community. There is a safe injection site, a detox clinic, and accessible health care facilities, all networked together with the aforementioned social enterprises to create a safe zone for drug users. In short, what were once killing fields are now fields of possibility.

The engine driving these projects is, according to Zigon, an ethics of dwelling, understood as the existential need to create a new world beyond the uninhabitable ruins of the old. This idea is most compelling in terms of anthropological theory. Ordinary language ethicists who have shaped much of anthropology's ethical turn are caught in the same metaphysical double bind as the human rights warriors, insofar as both rely on the conceptual frameworks that constitute the politics of the *a priori*, specifically the Kantian language of transcendental rights, dignity, and obligation. In particular, Zigon criticizes Michael Lambek's insistence on dissolving the ethical into the social, arguing that such an equivalence makes it analytically impossible to distinguish one from the other. As the Vancouver case makes clear, ethical creativity can transform the social, and once new forms of sociality are in place an erstwhile inconceivable ethics can become commonplace.

Not everyone will agree with the author's approach. Likewise, plenty will flinch at the philosophical legwork required to grasp it. Nevertheless, Zigon has provided an indispensable critical and theoretical tool kit to help us wriggle out of the straitjacket of disappointment created by the politics of the *a priori*—to help us take the world not just as it is but as it could be. He gives us the conceptual apparatus to move beyond these restrictive presuppositions so

that the imagining and enacting of new worlds, in all their latent potentiality, might emerge as an alternative politics in which anthropologists might have a role far more significant than previously thought.

**The Mana of Mass Society.** William Mazzarella. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. 224 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12779

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In *The Mana of Mass Society*, William Mazzarella brings the concept of mana into contemporary anthropological debates about how to think about mass media advertising and politics. Although mana—that substance that obsessed anthropologists (and psychologists) a hundred years ago—never went away from conversations about power and persuasion, Mazzarella skillfully illuminates why a thorough critique of its past interpretations and deployments is worthwhile. Rather than perpetuating an undying zombie concept that fixes outmoded primitive-modern framings, he reads deeply into the literature of anthropology’s early mana makers—Émile Durkheim, Marcel Mauss, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and others—to arrive at a theory of a mana of mass publicity and politics that challenges conventional anthropological uses and meanings of culture, our discipline’s mana, as it were.

In the book’s four chapters, Mazzarella reviews the concept of mana by guiding the reader through the methodological concept of settlements, which he explains is a “term to suggest the tension between the appearance of a negotiated, reasonable compromise and the violence of the settler whose stability of residence depends on the displacement and disavowal of the one that his presence silences” (10). It is important to recognize that settlements, here, are inherently full of tension, contradictory, and problematic. Although he claims that there are many kinds of settlements, Mazzarella focuses his attention on three.

In chapter 1, he addresses the empiricist settlement, which lays out the boundaries between armchair speculative anthropology and fieldwork-based anthropology. Chapter 2, on the primitive settlement, explores how anthropologists, psychologists, and critical theorists for half a century separated primitive from civilized practices to make arguments about otherness and culture. In chapter 3, Mazzarella takes on the aesthetic settlement, the world of art and exhibition, explaining that this is where magic and its power and potential danger (mana) are made safe for the civilized. What is at stake here is the unsettling of the settlement that puts primitive mana into civilized society via art. Framing mana within the context of modern art

contains it and makes it sensible. This magic-art is, he explains, “a substance that marks its vital progress as much as it threatens its certainties” (120) and becomes, ultimately, a “regressive deployment of quasi-magical powers” (123) in mass media publicity, entertainment, and politics. In the final chapter, he lays out how we are living in a moment of rapidly changing technologies and geopolitics, in which mana is a useful tool for understanding these changes.

The book is part historical overview and critique of anthropological theory and practice and part reflection about how to rethink mana’s meaning and potency for the present. Mazzarella reads deeply into Durkheim and Mauss to theorize how we are individually spoken to—how certain ideas, things, words resonate with us as individuals—and how those same ideas, things, words can activate and mobilize us collectively to consume and embrace (or protest or deny) what we did not ourselves realize we wanted. He reflects on the history of mana debates and, then, injects it, mana, into a critique of anthropological theoretical practice to arrive at a way to understand its possibilities.

In many ways, *The Mana of Mass Society* is a kindred spirit to Michael Taussig’s 1993 *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. Like Taussig’s, Mazzarella’s is a meta-analysis review of armchair and, then, ethnography-based anthropology and art world aesthetics in which he takes great pleasure in illustrating how primitive-modern, self-other, individual-collective distinctions break down and expose ourselves to ourselves. Such dynamics entailed in the dialectical relations that he considers are also about participation and representation and the power relations that resonate through them.

For example, in chapter 2, Mazzarella explains that in the primitive settlement debates about modern and primitive played out in ways that caused friction with European conceptualizations about distinctions between the two. Anthropologists “were perfectly positioned to step in and redeem the controlling presence of a European self-image unsettled by the provocation of a vast new international apparatus of mass publicity and the uncanny new forms of encounter and self-displacement” (96). Basically, this friction was a place where anthropologists could explain why participation in totalitarian populism and mass publicity played out similarly to what was described as the collective mass behavior of primitive peoples. However, although anthropologists fell far short of doing this, they could still rethink mana as a substance that resonates or activates some resonance that makes problematic settlements become recognizable.

Mazzarella’s exploration of the concept of mana begins with these original debates and their lingering effects to arrive at a place to posit an alternative interpretation that can be applied to contemporary issues like brand marketing and advertising campaigns or charismatic political

personalities and their effects on masses of people. Be it media and advertising or the politics of enchanting individuals and social movements, “the enthusiast’s commitment should feel like both the fulfillment of a personal destiny and the working out of a collective task” (140). Thus, Mazzarella explores the tension between the critical freethinking individual and the individual subsumed as part of the crowd, a member of mass society. How this individual—at once autonomous and part of a group—is swayed by advertisers’ marketing strategies or politicians’ speeches can be understood via the concept of mana.

These communicative manipulations by the contemporary mana workers of marketing and politics are not just random mass blasts of ideas and emotions aimed at hopeful targets but something far more complex and connected to the root of who we are. Understanding these processes as “the social dialectic between historically layered, sensuously resonant potentials and their renewed . . . actualization in discourse, built form, and social practice” helps steer us away from concepts of culture that tend “toward stasis and reification” (147).

As the above quote shows, Mazzarella’s book is not a light read, not only because he favors abstractions but because he presupposes that the reader will have a good knowledge of the debates about mana as well as the core anthropological and critical theory literatures. It will not appeal to many, who may very well consider the text impenetrable and obtuse. However, putting in time with it is rewarding on multiple levels—as a historical overview and critique of an anthropological concept and as an illustration of how past anthropological ideas can have contemporary vitality and relevance.

**The Justice Facade: Trials of Transition in Cambodia.**

Alexander Hinton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 304 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12780

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Transitional justice is an increasingly common global term that scholars of legal practices in states recently riven by mass human rights violations use to mark changes in law concerning how to adjudicate such violations to effect a salutary future. With its promises of reconciliation, at the local level transitional justice becomes imbued with meaning by those who orchestrate its performativity. Alexander Hinton addresses the fact that much of the literature on transitional justice is trapped in normative binaries, even as scholars and practitioners strive to understand the nuances of translating transitional justice across contexts. By

unpacking the transitional justice imaginary—the idealized utopian future that the model promotes—and analyzing everyday life and the process of translating justice in Cambodia, he shows that transitional justice studies continue to remain divorced from the reality of transitional justice practices by failing to capture what transitional justice means to survivors, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Implementation of transitional justice relies on outdated notions of cultural evolution in which members of societies broken by human rights violations can progress into advanced unified peoples through this international framework. Hinton argues that such universalistic and progressive assumptions regarding the method, mode, success, and interpretation of transitional justice obfuscate the critical cultural and sociopolitical contexts necessary for meaningful change. This begs the question, What is the point of transitional justice? Do its tools provide the utopian ideal that its proponents advertise? And why does that ideal replicate popular notions of contemporary Western societies? While transitional justice scholars consistently conclude that transitional justice can be used to mask or divert attention away from pressing economic or structural concerns, Hinton actually demonstrates how it can achieve this vis-à-vis NGO development, the media, and the imposition of international legal culture. To present transitional justice in practice, he examines human rights documents and sensitization materials used to engage rural Cambodians in the legal trial process. Combined with this, he uses data drawn from observation, participant-observation, and interviews with NGO founders, media representatives, survivors, and key informants to produce a robust analysis of transitional justice as a vehicle for meaning making and for shaping local ideologies.

Dominant academic discussions of transitional justice interrogate global versus local or juxtapose pre-transitional justice social fracturing against a post-transitional justice reconciled future. Using the Cambodian case, Hinton first positions the Khmer Rouge era in a longitudinal sociopolitical context, giving insight into events before the reign of violence as well as subsequent changes in power. Similarly, rather than viewing transitional justice, specifically the creation of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, as a solitary criminal tribunal with a finite start and endpoint, he investigates the diverse justice efforts that preceded it, revealing justice as an ever-evolving concept with myriad interpretations and goals. This contextual analysis deviates from other research, which assumes an absence of or disregards national or regional redress efforts that came before formal transitional justice models.

To structure his argument, Hinton uses a simplified water analogy (which is sometimes distracting) to establish three parts: “Vortices,” “Turbulence,” and “Eddies.” In “Vortices,” he outlines the various cultural transitions

that—though unrecognized by the transitional justice narrative—occurred in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge regime in an effort to reconcile the past. These transitions began with the construction of an atrocity narrative and include the multipronged NGO efforts to establish democracy. Also within this section, Hinton describes the NGO culture on the ground and the progression of survivor participation. He analyzes sensitization materials developed for outreach to members of rural communities who had minimal knowledge of the government-based legal system and whose linguistic framework was not inherently compatible with international legal terminology. Instead, dispute resolution occurred predominantly through mediation and the utilization of Buddhist concepts such as dharma (*thomm*). Hinton's insights into local-level translations of justice add a dimension to knowledge production in transitional justice scholarship that could not be captured without this detailed ethnographic approach.

Part 2, "Turbulence," focuses primarily on victim participation in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia with shifting foci based on aesthetics, performance, and translation of the transitional justice imaginary. A gap exists as Hinton contrasts international transitional justice frameworks against the cultural lived realities of everyday individuals who may interact with spirits of the dead and subscribe to notions of justice meted out by the hand of the universe. In the third and final part, "Eddies," he analyzes the development and work of the Documentation Center of Cambodia and explicates the idea of breaking the silence—leading to the empowerment that transitional justice presumably imbues participants with when they speak their truths for the historical record.

Buddhism shapes much of what Hinton analyzes. It informs how individuals view and navigate legal spaces and practices, how the responsibility of reconciliation may in fact fall upon the survivor, and how the language of justice is understood. Drawing on analyses of courtroom translations that fail to recognize the complex and culturally specific linguistic references tied into local cosmology, Hinton makes a compelling argument that the perspective of participants is sanitized or erased within formalized transitional justice practices. Furthermore, building on scholarship such as Sally Merry's notions of vernacularization, he uses everyday narratives to illustrate how transitional justice practices can be framed to impersonate, rather than replicate, local belief systems. As sensitization materials were developed, they were intentionally framed in terms of local cosmological beliefs in an effort to make transitional justice relatable at the local level. However, this reveals an attempt to make transitional justice appear normative or natural, when indeed it is built to meet international standards rather than local beliefs.

Overall, *The Justice Facade* compels practitioners and academics alike to consider an ethnographically grounded

phenomenological approach. Hinton's analysis of data from material culture, participant-observation, observation, and interviews moves transitional justice debates beyond essentialism to demonstrate the process for translating and fostering transitional justice ideologies and practices at the ground level. By identifying concepts, beliefs, and culture norms that are masked by the framework, he reveals the positive as well as the negative impacts of transitional justice on the everyday lives of survivors. For those who desire to understand how international justice reproduces ideologies at the ground level and intertwines itself into local beliefs, *The Justice Facade* is the book to read.

**The Nature of Whiteness: Race, Animals, and Nation in Zimbabwe.** Yuka Suzuki. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017. 232 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12781

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I am a North American anthropologist of education who has visited South Africa seven times in the last decade, three times leading intense travel studies that included partnering with white, Indian, and black African professors and advanced students. I am white and I was raised to value the preservation of nature. Each of these points matters for how I read Yuka Suzuki's masterful *The Nature of Whiteness* and, I suspect, variously pertains to how other readers will experience this text as well.

Strictly speaking, this is a book about Zimbabwe (where I have never been), not South Africa, but its focus on white wildlife farmers' efforts to "redeem whiteness" (23) in the face of a history that registers their imperious misdeeds is very familiar. According to Suzuki, redemption comes through the stewardship of nature, and she offers a sharp one-sentence thesis: "this book argues that projects of whiteness are aligned with projects of nature" (8). While her account attends to the fact that Zimbabwe is mostly black African, she focuses her inquiry on the white, rural, former cattle ranchers who began turning from that always marginal pursuit in the final days of Rhodesia in the 1970s.

With the 10-year promise of no forced land redistribution that had helped end the guerrilla war and establish majority-ruled Zimbabwe in 1980, the nascent conversion by white farmers to wildlife management accelerated. Their new work involved building lodges, supporting safaris, and making improvements like clearing fences and digging wells that enabled wildlife to use their vast properties. This was much more lucrative than agriculture and less vulnerable to disasters like drought that follow natural cycles. As wildlife production began to dominate the Mlilo

Valley (Suzuki's pseudonym), those who tried to stick with cattle ranching found it both more hazardous (as predators were now valuable big-game trophies instead of pests and thus more common) and less welcome by their neighbors, who all benefited if wildlife mobility was not impeded.

When Suzuki arrived in the late 1990s, she found relatively prosperous white landowners who, while still subject to the critiques of their disproportionate share of the national wealth, rationalized their claims to the land not just on their multigenerational ties but—crucially—on the idea that they were particularly able stewards of Zimbabwe's natural abundance. Their stewardship became both racialized—differing from the stance of local black Zimbabweans whose much more meager resources were in greater jeopardy if or when a herd of elephants trampled their fields or a lion killed their chickens—and foundational to claims of being good. As the West became increasingly conscious of the planet's fragility, these white Zimbabweans became less those who resisted the end of their racial advantage in Rhodesia and more the country's interface to international tourists and conservation organizations eager to witness the preservation of charismatic megafauna and wild places. If the former identity pointed to ignominy, the latter pointed to morality.

That morality, in turn, meant that other users of the land and other uses of it could be criticized and resisted. In Suzuki's words, "Through the reinvention of their identities, [white] farmers articulated their new role as environmentalists working in the interests of the nation-state to lessen the stigma of visible whiteness. Conservation thus served as a depoliticizing tool, displacing moral critiques of farmers' disproportionate privilege and turning access to land into a matter of technocratic expertise" (152).

Yet Suzuki's account does not end with the white farmers keeping their land. Instead, in 2000, as the politics of leading unequal Zimbabwe continued to pressure the increasingly autocratic Mugabe regime, it permitted black veterans of the independence struggle (a category that included many too young to be veterans) to squat on and seize white wildlife farmers' landholdings. These new squatters initially tried their hand at modest farming in Mlilo and were just as unsuccessful as white settlers had been 70 years earlier. For reasons ranging from selling game meat to supplementing diets to targeting symbols associated with whiteness, they also slaughtered much of the wildlife that white landowners had previously embraced, earning the disdain and outrage of many Westerners, whom black Zimbabweans could then charge with caring more for Africa's fauna than for its people.

For Suzuki, Zimbabwe is an instantiation of a more pervasive pattern in which whiteness, "when paired with nature, erases the tracings of its own fashioning." So upward social mobility, education, class distinction, and modernity, each tied to whiteness, can be "performed by

enacting particular forms of engagement with nature." Similarly, going on safaris, keeping pets, and advocating for animals' well-being "reveal one's enlightenment and ascendancy in relation to the natural world" (156). Nature has a place for whites—as stewards, advocates, and recreational participants—but less of a place for nonwhites, at least in Africa. That thesis is surely provocative, but it is also quite soundly argued here.

I have recommended this book to many, including many who do not think of themselves as anthropologists, Africanists, or conservationists, but I do have some minor criticisms. I wish it had included a map of Zimbabwe or even southern Africa. While such a map would not need to locate Mlilo (with the intent of preserving anonymity), given that the book does name nearby Hwange National Park, a map could help the vast majority of readers not deeply familiar with Zimbabwean geography. Suzuki also makes relatively little effort to connect her book to the work of David McDermott Hughes, author of the 2010 *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging*; her index lists just three brief mentions. I have not read Hughes's book, but given the overlap in topics apparent from his title and the fact that he makes an appearance with a supporting blurb on the back cover of *The Nature of Whiteness* (suggesting good relations with Suzuki and her work), the paucity of tie-ins seems odd.

**Coastal Sierra Leone: Materiality and the Unseen in Maritime West Africa.** Jennifer Diggins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 248 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12782

**DANIEL JORDAN SMITH**

Brown University

Jennifer Diggins's *Coastal Sierra Leone* is a brilliant, compelling, ethnographically rich account of the intersection of morality and economy in a busy fishing community. Beautifully written, the book offers riveting stories of everyday struggles to survive in a place of ecological depletion, state neglect, and uncertain economic and social change. Yet as much as Diggins's account evokes empathy for her interlocutors, *Coastal Sierra Leone* is equally noteworthy for the author's unflinching attention to the underbelly of social life in this maritime community. At once sensitive to people's hardships and attuned to the moral hazards of making a living and a life in such precarious circumstances, Diggins neither romanticizes nor pathologizes her subjects.

If the book is admirable for its lucid writing, multi-dimensional characters, and fine balance between compassion and hard-nosed analysis, it is equally noteworthy

for its ambitious theorizing and erudite engagement with the relevant literature. *Coastal Sierra Leone* challenges conventional scholarly wisdom on a number of fronts—among them the relationship between economy and morality, the nature of witchcraft, the role of orality in economic and social life, and the precise relationship of secrecy to power in Sierra Leone's material and immaterial economies. Rather than polemically opposing the scholarship she expertly cites, Diggins develops nuanced challenges to—or, perhaps more accurately, productive extensions of—established theory in the areas that interest her. She makes her arguments so deftly that I suspect most of the scholars whose work she engages will find her contributions to be welcome additions. That is a laudable achievement.

While there are many things to applaud in this book, for me its most significant contributions come with regard to the intersecting issues of economy and morality and of materiality and immateriality. At its most basic, the book powerfully reminds us of the intertwining of moralities and economies and of the interpenetration of the material and the immaterial in human social life. But it is the detail of Diggins's empirical evidence, the precision of her argumentation, and her innovative answers to timeless questions that make *Coastal Sierra Leone* such a valuable addition to the literature.

On the relationship between economy and morality, Diggins examines many dimensions; perhaps most provocatively, she argues that the men and women who migrated to Tissana, the coastal fishing community she studied, sought freedom from the brutality of the patronage system that characterized agricultural life in rural Sierra Leone. Pushing back against what is arguably the dominant view in anthropology, she says that “far from being nostalgic for the lost morality of a pre-capitalist world, many people in Tissana entered this commercial world with the explicit hope of escaping a deeply embedded ‘traditional’ economic system” (64). Part of her point is that people are tethered to this traditional economic system not only materially but also morally—that is, by social relationships laden with obligations. Diggins's migrant fisherfolk were emotionally enervated by the ties that bound them to their village, as well as materially burdened by the entanglements of kinship and the moral expectations of reciprocity. Escaping such burdens was a big part of why they migrated.

But while her interlocutors yearned for the imagined social freedoms and material comforts associated with a capitalist market economy, Diggins goes on to show how people's experiences of economic success and liberation from the shackles of rural village life are fleeting. In the end, in the face of the economic uncertainties of forging a livelihood through fishing, nearly everyone she knows in Tissana falls back on cultivating social ties, rooted in strong moral obligations created through reciprocal exchange. Far from being happy about the intertwining of morality, sociality,

and economic survival, Diggins's interlocutors are deeply ambivalent.

Understanding the ways that Sierra Leonean fisherfolk navigate economic precarity requires a recognition of the material effects of seemingly immaterial aspects of social life. For example, men and women in Tissana constantly rely on spoken words—most especially blessings and “swear medicine”—not simply to interpret or provide meaning to social reality but in order to mobilize morality to enable them to cultivate and manage the social relationships upon which survival depends. Diggins's analysis of blessings and swear medicine leads to a complex rendering of the interpenetration of the material and immaterial dimensions of social life and also to some intriguing contributions to the literature on witchcraft, secrecy, and the relationship between literacy and orality.

Witchcraft in Tissana comes across as a more quotidian and often as a more benign endeavor than stereotypical images of witchcraft in West Africa suggest. Furthermore, secrecy in Tissana, while still related to power in ways that will be familiar to scholars of Sierra Leone and West Africa, weaves its way through everyday sociality and is associated with positive as well as dangerous aspects of human character. With regard to the effects of literacy on oral cultures, Diggins shows that in Tissana people construct, remember, and try to enforce extremely complicated accountings for economic transactions and debts without ever writing anything down, even though most people are literate. At the very least, she complicates narratives about the world-changing effects of literacy.

Finally, the book provides an extended look at life in postwar Sierra Leone that allows readers to understand Sierra Leoneans' experiences through something other than the prism of conflict, violence, and trauma. It is precisely through Diggins's attention to the moral dimensions of people's economic struggles that their humanity is recognized and respected. The five ethnographic chapters that make up the middle of the book are so well crafted that each could be read independently. But the book as a whole is even stronger than the sum of its excellent parts. I strongly recommend reading it all. I couldn't put it down.

**Making News in Global India: Media, Publics, Politics.** *Sahana Udupa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 292 pp.

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**KIMBERLY WALTERS**

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What becomes of print newspapers and their readers in the high-tech hub of Bengaluru in the wake of India's economic

liberalization and the rapid influx of global capital, multinational corporations, and diversified consumer products? How is the signifier of Bengaluru as a global city differently deployed by English and Kannada newspapers? How does the notion of a global city reconfigure readerships and reorient them to questions of language, class, caste, and politics? Ultimately, what forms of desire, visibility, and political action do these postliberalization news-making practices enable? These are among the intriguing questions that Sahana Udupa answers in her wide-ranging, ambitious, and intricately argued ethnography of the production and consumption of print newspapers in Bengaluru from 2008 to 2012.

The great strength of the book lies in Udupa's impressive level of access both to the spaces that news producers traverse—the offices of proprietors and editors, newsroom floors, sites of reportage, and reporters' social clubs, for example—and to their more intimate thoughts and feelings. This access (both wide and deep) stems in part from her status as an inside-outsider who previously worked as a journalist among her interlocutors. Udupa informs the reader that she grew up in Bengaluru speaking both Kannada and English, and her ethnography makes it clear that she brings extensive knowledge of the city's complex social fields to bear on her microanalyses of journalists' various positionings and affiliations. While she pays special attention to the meteoric rise of the *Times of India* in the late 1990s and early 2000s, her analytical ambit encompasses nearly a dozen other newspapers published in either English or Kannada, and she also delves into the history of newspapers catering to specific castes in the preindependence era.

Official rhetoric aside, caste strongly shapes how newspapers are produced and who reads them in Bengaluru. Using the term *structured visibility*, Udupa forwards the claim that mediated power contestations are “increasingly structured in urban India through revived ideologies of regional languages . . . and caste practices” (14). In contradistinction to Arvind Rajagopal's take on Hindi and English news publics, Udupa demonstrates that in Bengaluru, English newspapers do not carry the privilege of apparent objectivity. Kannada journalists, in fact, deride English dailies for their lack of weightiness and objectivity and their championing of beauty, celebrity, and consumerism (all coded as feminizing) as inherently newsworthy.

Udupa examines the *Times of India's* various strategies to recruit and groom a readership that is young, nontraditional, and globally oriented through her concept of patterned permeations. She uses the term to describe the paper's highly successful tactics to rapidly expand its readership in the 1990s. The *Times* managed its coup in part by decentering journalistic objectivity in news making and recentering readers' subjective experiences of aspiration, desire, and responsible citizenship. To generate news and constitute (rather than represent) publics, the paper

routinely enlisted specific kinds of readers (English-speaking corporate employees of middle-class and upper-caste backgrounds) to engage with public officials in staged spectacles of civic activism. The paper itself organized these spectacles in the name of reader connectivity and democratic participation. It also used them to center itself and its readers as the topics of news themselves. Udupa argues that the paper's porous boundaries among bureaucrats, authors of the news, and news readers fostered a neoliberal, rights-based discourse focused on demands for improved infrastructure, services, and transparency. At the same time, these forms of apparent activism and connectivity obscured the active erasure of the urban poor from Bengaluru's public sphere.

Newspapers written in Kannada demonstrated a different pattern. To characterize their workings, Udupa offers the concepts of *bhasha* media (roughly translatable as “vernacular media”) and print communalism, foregrounding language and caste respectively. *Bhasha* media marked Kannada publics as imagined to be temporally prior, culturally rich, and morally superior to English publics. The ideology of *bhasha* sutured together language, land, laborers, and literature in ways that pushed past the limits of class and caste. *Bhasha* media marked English, by contrast, as opportunistic, culturally shallow, and morally suspect. Through news practices, language became the battle line in the struggle for control of the global city.

*Bhasha* media also displayed animosity toward migrant groups (especially North Indian) and toward languages other than Kannada (especially English). This deflected the fact that many Kannada journalists and readers had themselves only recently migrated to Bengaluru from rural areas, while many speakers of other languages had inhabited the city for generations. Language ideologies intersected with caste practices as many Kannada newspapers directly addressed specific caste groups. Caste also guided the allegiances of journalists within and across newsrooms by providing the network for the circulation of affective affiliations, favors, gossip, and tips. Whereas English dailies disavowed any overt acknowledgment of caste practices as traditional, their own hiring and sourcing systems in fact cemented caste affiliations. The *Times of India*, for example, was dominated by upper-caste journalists, while papers like the *Deccan Herald* (also in English) conspicuously replaced their preponderance of upper-caste employees with those from oppressed castes.

Despite the wide reach of Udupa's analysis, I suggest that one facet of making news deserved greater consideration: gender. Given that Kannada journalists characterized English news as trafficking in female sexuality and that they tended to describe English journalists as young and female, gender would seem to be a central issue to news making. Indeed, Udupa notes that she experienced the exclusionary practices of male journalists while producing news, and



her other data—for example, the Pink Underwear campaign against Kannada chauvinists—point to gender ideologies as central to constructing difference between English and Kannada publics. Yet the book stops short of taking gender as an explicit object of analysis except in brief passages.

Udupa's introduction of analytical terminology presents another slight stumbling block. The book offers up so many terms that a reader may too readily lose track of the intrinsically interesting story they frame. Some of these terms are not thoroughly defined at first but instead are attached somewhat abruptly to the narrative, so that the reader is sometimes left to work out the edges of their contours through their various usages. Nevertheless, *Making News in Global India* offers welcome correctives to normative theories of news making as public, objective, and democratic. By tracing the personal histories, interests, and ambitions of local newspaper proprietors and individual journalists who propel news-making practices, Udupa situates the news beyond the reach of the neater theorizations of neoliberalism and globalization. Her take on the news scene in Bengaluru is theoretically fresh, topically extensive, and ethnographically satisfying.

**Back to the Postindustrial Future: An Ethnography of Germany's Fastest-Shrinking City.** Felix Ringel. New York: Berghahn, 2018. 238 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12784

**ANDREW BRANDEL**

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Felix Ringel's new book may be the most thorough ethnographic study on the imagination of the future in rapidly shrinking industrial cities—a phenomenon deeply entangled with resurgent populism and antimigrant sentiment in Europe and the United States. While conventional analyses have understood this situation to be determined by particular historical processes and, in turn, orientations toward an inevitably bleak future, Ringel shows how local forms of knowledge about personal and collective futures are varied and exert a substantial influence on their collective present.

Hoyerswerda, once Germany's fastest-growing city, is a site well positioned to help develop new perspectives on postindustrial futures. Designed as a crucial 1950s experiment in central planning and built entirely from prefabricated materials, Hoyerswerda was to address a growing housing crisis in the region after labor prospects led to a population explosion by the 1980s. With the collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and its incorporation into the modernized global capitalist system, economic fortunes disintegrated. Soaring unemployment led young people to leave in record numbers; in turn,

officials dismantled Hoyerswerda's cityscape as quickly as it had been constructed. Losing out on a future in socialist utopia *and* in a capitalist Western imaginary, Hoyerswerda seemed stuck in the past—in the socialist past but also at times in Nazism, as in 1991 when the first xenophobic attacks in reunified Germany took place against former contract workers and asylum seekers—a phenomenon that while present today throughout Germany is often still tied discursively to the former East.

Against the “retrospective tendency of culturizing . . . existence in time” (180), Ringel introduces us to a “local economy of knowledge” (14) through which Hoyerswerda's residents make sense of their world. Contests arise between competing stories of past and future, each mobilizing historical contexts in different ways. Anthropological approaches to the postindustrial condition, however, often obscure such complexity by constructing metacontexts or selecting particular contextual narratives: often postmodernism, Marxism, or postsocialism. Ringel instead foregrounds local frameworks of analysis arising from within Hoyerswerda to describe “new and unprecedented forms of decline” (52)—indeed, local heuristics like “shrinkage” and “demise” prove capacious enough to bear the multiplicity of interconnected contexts.

These contested conceptual responses to “demise” are most forcibly articulated through practices of youth education and in public art projects. Scenes of moral education emerge as Hoyerswerda's future is negotiated relative to its past. This field of temporal references locates the city in a world that is post-1945, postsocialism, and post-1991, emerging most clearly in Ringel's rich account of a Christian grammar school that arrogates to itself a moral duty to intervene against the rising threat of neo-Nazis in the post-Wall East and that features a community discussion project called Against Forgetting (*Wider das Vergessen*) funded by local government and organized by aging leftists.

In another especially compelling case about interclass competition, students conduct research projects on local history and present their findings in front of a panel of judges made up of victims of the GDR, setting the stage for some instructive generational clashes in such “temporal reasoning” (92). While the judges, consisting primarily of Stasi victims, made general gestures of condemnation regarding Germany's Nazi past, their principal concern was the continued commemoration of the GDR period (though they were divided on the relationship between the two). The students, by contrast, were far less concerned with the GDR's legacy and far more divided on Nazism. While a right-wing faction deploying Nazi language to imagine a distant future frequently interrupted efforts at commemoration, left-wing groups rarely made use of historical, dystopian, or utopian rhetoric of either kind.

A series of public debates about urban planning demonstrated the agency expressed by Hoyerswerda's elites

in responding to conflicting temporal experiences. This “temporal flexibility” enabled the articulation of alternative temporal politics when city officials managing Hoyerwerda’s decline were unable to provide a “convincing idea of the near future” (92). Failure of hegemony created the opportunity for a contest over context between the Lord Mayor (described as shifting temporal reasoning away from active planning toward a more affective register, a strategy intended to evacuate the near future so that bleak horizons didn’t exacerbate the problem) and local architectural elites (actively engaged in planning for a future through the reevaluation of the socialist past). Anticipation of the yet-to-come future was inflected not only by reason but also by an affective intensity—a vision that if compelling enough was thought to actually create a reality. Locals understood proclamations about the future to be charged with an affective pessimism—that there was no future in Hoyerwerda—which encouraged youth out-migration. In response, a group of local entrepreneurs using the name The City’s Future (*StadtZukunft*) launched a public project entitled Youth Has Visions! that asked students to formulate optimistic visions of the future. Ringel compares these efforts with the Lord Mayor’s hiring of a marketing firm to pitch the public a story of hope as a “reorientation of knowledge” (120) about the future.

In the end, one finds a community more interested in a “simple hope for *concrete* solutions” (143) than invested in promises of vague affective relations to the future. This hope for the “efficacy of future knowledge” (18), which endures in the face of deterioration despite reasonable expectations that the future will continue to worsen, requires performative work—for example, taking the form of citizens’ efforts to protect the future of one of the city’s most prestigious buildings. But the future is also given shape through mundane ways of talking, in the organization of social gatherings, and in activist art projects. In the end, Ringel’s tone is hopeful. Despite continued shrinkage, activities like a community dance project offer an emotional response to the city’s problems predicated on affirming the “pure joy of life” (183), on the possibilities for living life together in the face of ubiquitous claims that no life is worth living there.

*Back to the Postindustrial Future* is a sustained and provocative meditation on the ethnographic study of time as an “epistemic problem” (12). The presentist perspective that Ringel advocates is best summarized in his pithy reformulation of a Leibnizian adage: it explores, he says, “how the present is *made* to be charged with the past and *made* to be pregnant with the future” (66). While the project is inspired by debates in professional philosophy about the metaphysics of time, it is more concerned with the “(epistemic) repercussions of a much broader collapse of formerly powerful modern and postmodern narratives of the future” (10). The future, he argues, is a matter of time, time

a matter of knowledge, and knowledge a matter of practice. The book is a bold and, dare I say, timely intervention, a reminder that our understandings of the present are ascendant historical approaches to systems of thought, however attentive to contingency and power, not analyses of the contemporary; they are also contingent knowledge practices located within local and global economies.

**Landscapes of Power: Politics of Energy in the Navajo Nation.** Dana E. Powell. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018. 336 pp.

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**SEAN P. BRUNA**

Western Washington University

In today’s political battles concerning energy, those of us on the side of conservation can be quick to imagine desolate oil fields broken by the sounds of fracking, horizons interrupted by windmills, or massive pits caved for their coal. In New Mexico, the history of energy production, particularly the residual pollution from uranium mining on Diné (Navajo) land, has been well documented in such popular and academic texts as Judy Pasternak’s *Yellow Dirt: An American Story of a Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed* and Traci Brynne Voyles’s *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*. Dana Powell’s *Landscapes of Power* builds on this material to offer a theoretically sound and thoughtful narrative that moves from the imagined landscapes of pollution and degradation to how the politics of tribal sovereignty is entwined with the environmental justice activism that emerges from the sociocultural life of the inhabitants of the Diné Nation.

Powell’s focus is a proposed but never developed 1,500-megawatt coal-fired power plant on Diné Nation land in northwestern New Mexico. Using the Desert Rock Energy Project as a case study, she examines how the Diné Nation, Site Global Power, and both tribal and nontribal activists engage in the production of and opposition to energy development. Resistance to the power plant both reinforces Diné claims to sovereignty and meets with counterclaims and debates about what forms of energy should be explored. Rather than simply recount an opposition movement in action, Powell carefully crafts an ethnography that reveals how items created by the production of and opposition to energy development—paintings, photographs, cartoons, recorded television shows, and stickers—become *the* debate and part of a new collective memory about political action that lives long after the controversy. These artifacts, she explains, not only reinvigorate long-standing movements but generate a new collective space for the contestation

and fresh articulation of community-held beliefs and commitments.

The first four chapters are framed by four modalities of power—material-subterranean, cultural-political, knowledge-practice, and ethical-cosmological—each of which both shapes how landscapes are imagined or made manifest in the political arena and reflects Diné logics of intertwined cardinal directions. The material and subterranean are presented as the conversion of coal to energy, and the cultural-political may be thought of as the power of culture, knowledge-practice as public discourse and lived experience, and ethical-cosmological as the Diné system of thinking, being, and acting. The strength of this structure is that it reformulates the histories of energy extraction to demonstrate how energy permeated and transformed the government-to-government relationship between the Diné Nation and the United States, while allowing space to analyze the artifacts involved in energy activism, a highly political activist movement.

The fifth chapter draws each of the themes together by showing how their shared yet contested histories and futures are imagined by artists in the Diné Nation. Artists offer both utopian and dystopian visions of Diné landscapes and knowledges. For example, in *Bleeding Sky*, Diné artist James B. Joe painted a dystopic Diné family of four surrounded by pollution from a coal plant and high-powered transmission lines. The cyborg parents and one of the two children use breathing devices—oxygen fed from a tank, a painter's mask, and a World War II-era gas mask—and stare with hollowed eyes. In contrast, the second child stands in slight defiance but with a redacted mouth, able to see the pollution around her but unable to speak. *Bleeding Sky* and the other works discussed in the chapter illustrate local knowledges, activate local histories, and present the competing possibilities of power in the Diné Nation in ways that the public as well as readers of the ethnography can relate to, discuss, and debate.

Powell's conclusion, more of a conversation with the reader, revises her argument to reaffirm that the plurality of energy politics, along with pathways into tribal and environmental actions, becomes clearer when a diverse range of actors and artifacts is carefully and thoughtfully examined. By doing so, *Landscapes of Power* challenges our notion of environmental activism by deepening the analytical space shared by tribal leaders, scholars, artists, and community members who labor together to advance sovereignty and, ultimately, the health of the Diné people.

*Landscapes of Power* is particularly well suited for American Indian studies and anthropology courses that examine the intersecting challenges and interests of economic development, environmental justice, and tribal sovereignty. Although the book omits the specific ethnographic methods used, an unfortunate oversight given the

level of tribal approval and partnership that likely went into conducting this research, Powell does provide glimpses into conducting an ethnography in or with indigenous communities. In three interludes and an epilogue, she steps aside from a theoretically intriguing study and authoritative voice to remind the reader that ethnographers conduct their research within communities and with individuals. In these sections more than others, Powell shows us that individual livelihoods are at the heart of any ethnographic work, especially those that address the politics of energy in New Mexico.

**Monacan Millennium: A Collaborative Archaeology and History of a Virginia Indian People.** Jeffrey L. Hantman. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018. 232 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/amet.12786

**MARGARET WILLIAMSON HUBER**

University of Mary Washington

This informative account of Monacan history and prehistory is a collaboration between the author and the Monacans themselves: to the increase of knowledge on both sides. Jeffrey Hantman explains why the Powhatans allowed the nascent Jamestown colony to exist and why the Monacans, who figure significantly in the earliest English colonial writings from the Outer Banks and Tidewater Virginia, more or less disappeared from later colonial and then American accounts of these areas. He shows the emergence of the Monacans as a distinct and enduring cultural group, describes as much of their culture as possible, and gives some idea of modern Monacan life, including their successful efforts to obtain (belated) recognition as a tribe from the Commonwealth of Virginia and from the federal government.

The Monacans, today centered on Bear Mountain in Amherst County, Virginia, are the largest Indian group in the commonwealth. Until the past three decades, they have received minimal attention, academically or otherwise. This neglect is due in part to the earliest English colonial reports, which later ethnohistorians accepted without question, that dismissed the Monacans as nomadic foragers. The Monacans themselves were mostly disinclined to engage with the colonists and their descendants, slipping ever further westward from their original lands in the Piedmont and the Valley of Virginia as European planters moved in and took over. Still later, between Anglo-American notions of "racial purity" and the determination of officials in the Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics to deny the very existence of Indians in Virginia, they were deemed by many no longer to exist.

Hantman offers us abundant evidence to the contrary. The Monacans themselves, through their oral histories and ways of talking about themselves as they are now, have made it clear that so far from being a marginal or a vanished people, they have for the past millennium been an identifiable and self-identifying society, many of whose traditions endure to the present day. From their discussions of their settlements ancient and modern, Hantman learned to look at them in Monacan terms—for instance, a river is the center of a town, not a barrier between parts of it. And despite avoiding the English colonists, the Monacans did have a significant influence on the course of colonial history in Virginia.

However much the English colonists wanted to see a clear boundary between the Powhatans and the Monacans, Hantman says, the reality was rather a shifting relationship of alliance and animosity, mostly the former. The variable nature of relations between the Monacans and the Powhatans, he suggests, explains why the latter allowed the Jamestown settlement to survive when they could very easily have destroyed it, as they did the earlier Spanish mission. By chance, the English arrived just at a time when relations between the Tidewater and the Piedmont were relatively sour, meaning that the Powhatans could not get the usual supplies of copper necessary for the economic activities of their high-status men. Because the English came prepared to offer copper in exchange for food and other commodities, they were welcomed as a substitute source. Clearly, as Hantman asserts, we must include the Monacans (and any inland peoples) in our interpretation of early colonial history in order to understand it properly. The Monacan hostility toward the Powhatans, temporary though it may have been, meant that Jamestown survived. The unintended consequence was that they themselves almost disappeared from history.

But the Monacans were no wild savages, whatever the Powhatans might have wanted the English to believe. Hantman's exhaustive study of the ethnohistorical records and his own and his colleagues' archaeological research demonstrate this. Like their better-known Algonquian neighbors to the east, they had towns and villages, grew crops, and managed the woodlands to allow successful hunting. Their society was hierarchical, with chiefs living in larger houses in larger towns and probably having influence over smaller settlements nearby. Their towns lay next to and incorporated a distinctive Monacan cultural trait, the

impressive accretional burial mounds in which the bones of the dead were buried jumbled together over a period of centuries. The earliest of these dates to perhaps AD 1000, when the shift from a regional homogeneity to increasingly distinct groups becomes clear in the archaeological record. The mounds retained their importance even into the 19th century. These, Hantman argues, are the heart of Monacan culture and identity, evidence of continuity both to us and to the Monacans. That they returned to these mounds every five to seven years to bury the bones of their dead persuades him that the Monacans relied on the material remains of their ancestors—and the places where they were buried—to remind themselves of their identity as well as to justify social differentiation.

Hantman makes several important theoretical and methodological points; his focus is on the Monacans, rather than on theory, so he does not elaborate on these for the most part, but they should not be neglected. He is admirably cautious about using the terms *identity* and *boundary*. Identity he sees, correctly, as a cultural construct, not uniform from culture to culture or from time to time within any culture. Boundary, far from being the conceptual equivalent of a palisade, is rather to be understood as a tapering off from a center, and as such it is always fluid and porous. Things, ideas, people, and genes cross and recross boundaries and may bring about an indigenous rethinking of identity. In discussing the emergence of social hierarchy, he urges us to cease thinking of it in materialist terms and look instead to nonmaterial influences such as the power of place in bringing one group to prominence. Following Marshall Sahlins, he rejects the assumption that when Europeans enter, indigenous peoples become like deer in the headlights, incapable of independent action and thus unable to affect the sequence of events or preserve their own culture. Likewise, he relegates the idea that a culture is fixed in time and space to the dustheap of dead-end theories.

Emphasizing continuity over dissolution and transformation over disappearance is, as Hantman insists, the most useful way of looking at culture. A material change does not in itself mean that the basic cultural ideas have altered. He offers numerous examples of how Monacans today, however much they may look like their non-Monacan neighbors in matters of food, clothing, and shelter, nevertheless have retained a distinct way of interpreting events and understanding the world. They are Monacans still.