

# Book Reviews

**My Life as a Night Elf Priest: An Anthropological Account of *World of Warcraft*.** Bonnie A. Nardi. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2010. 236 pp.

**HILDE G. CORNELIUSSEN**

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The massive multiplayer online game *World of Warcraft* (created by Blizzard) has since 2004 attracted millions of players all over the world. The popularity of the game has made it appear as an important phenomenon in our digital culture, and it attracts interest from researchers in a number of different disciplines. Bonnie A. Nardi has background in anthropology and studies social aspects of digital technologies. It is this expertise she brings to her ethnographic investigation of *World of Warcraft* in *My Life as a Night Elf Priest*.

To explore the game, Nardi has played a Night Elf Priest all the way to the “high-end” game—a phase of the play where group play is important. The title of the book, *My Life as a Night Elf Priest*, might be read as misleading. We are not invited to follow Nardi’s own game experience as much as we are invited to investigate the experiences of North American and Chinese players that Nardi has interviewed. Through the three parts of the book—an introductory part, a part entitled “Active Aesthetic Experience,” and the third focusing on cultural logics—Nardi engages in a number of topics and questions regarding player experience.

Nardi describes her goals as threefold. First, she investigates play as an active aesthetic experience. She combines activity theory and John Dewey’s notion of aesthetic experience, providing a framework for investigating the relationship between digital rules, game mechanics, aesthetic activity, and player experience. Nardi’s second aim is to understand “play in its contemporary digital manifestations” (p. 7). Virtual worlds are new arenas for communication and collaboration, simultaneously powered and restricted by technology. And, third, she wants to provide an ethnographic account of *World of Warcraft* that can help “those who will never play” this game to understand what video games mean in our culture (p. 7).

The first question that might interest nonplayers in particular is “What makes players enjoy *World of War-*

*craft*?” While the continuous rewards throughout the game are vital, the more important answer, Nardi suggests, is the combination of “sociality, the visual beauty . . . and a sense of performative mastery” (p. 40). Emphasizing the aesthetic aspect, Nardi found the game world to represent “a powerful visual experience like viewing a striking landscape—the world is fully realized” (p. 88). But *World of Warcraft* represents not only a work of art but also “a new visual-performative medium” providing an activity-based aesthetic experience. Compared to other “visual-performative” activities in the real world, like dancing clubs, paintball, or reenactments of historical events, *World of Warcraft* offers experiences that are more accessible to more people than most real world visual-performative activities. It is this combination, the easy access to aesthetic experience and the feeling of mastery that has made virtual worlds an integrated part of many people’s everyday lives.

Two other topics with interest to nonplayers are that of “video game addiction” and of gender in design and player culture. While questions of addiction often reach the popular press, Nardi prefers the notion of “problematic use.” Players themselves might use “addiction” to illustrate their strong attachment to the game. But players are also aware of the negative aspects of spending too much time with video games, supporting each other when they need to take a break from the game. As one player expressed it, “RL [real life] always comes first” (p. 131).

Nardi approached the game with the stereotype that gamers were young, lonely boys, but soon found that to be outdated. The game is used both to “step out” of “real life” and for socializing with friends and family, or meeting new friends, and players are young and old, men and women. Despite this mix, Nardi found that men set the tone in the game, causing more sexualized and homophobic language than accepted in most other everyday life contexts. However, the game also has elements attractive to women, and game activities include traditional masculine as well as feminine activities, making it “quietly subversive in its gender dynamics,” inviting men as well as women to engage in cross-gendered activities (p. 172).

Nardi engages in an analysis of the relationship between digital code, creativity, aesthetic experience, and human activity. Digital rules shape human activity, and the introduction of new digital rules might affect player

communities and, thus, player experience. Digital rules—the black boxed design of virtual worlds—have been discussed in various ways, as something to break, hack, or as “totalizing.” Negative effects because of a lack of rules in virtual worlds like *Second Life* make Nardi skeptical of increased player control. Nardi, however, suggests seeing digital rules “as resources preserving good design” and, thus, also good player experiences (p. 74).

Nardi and her research assistants visited China to explore Chinese players—the biggest national group of players for this game. In a comparison of Chinese and North American players, her main finding is that they are “remarkably” similar. The main difference is the importance of Internet cafés for Chinese players, where they met other players, playing in “a ‘mixed reality’ of virtual and physical social interaction” (p. 179).

Nardi clearly engages in a number of interesting discussions in her book; however, some of these topics could have been topics for books in themselves. In particular, the chapter about Chinese and North American players feels like a teaser, making me want to learn more, which I hope we will in the future. Nardi does, however, illustrate that video games are important to a varied group of players in their everyday life, as a separate world but also as a social platform for communication and collaboration. Nardi’s book also demonstrates that anthropologists have new worlds and “tribes” to study when sitting around a virtual bonfire.

**Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Identity and Development Politics in Latin America.** *Monica C. DeHart.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010. xiv + 192 pp.

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Development theory and practice have undergone a sea-shift in the last two decades or so. We have seen an increasing concern with social capital, agency, sustainability, and the role of social contexts and ethnic identities. The rhetoric, if not always the practice, is oriented toward aligning development interventions with local contexts. But just what are those local contexts? From the lofty heights of the World Bank they may seem straightforward. But it is too easy to simplify complexities into “the local.”

In this remarkable new multisited ethnography, Monica DeHart captures the complexities and contradictions of aligning international development with on-the-ground realities. Her “micropolitics of development” approach speaks to the growing movement to view “the local” and “the indigenous” as optimal sources of development. The hope is that “ethnic entrepreneurs” can use social and cul-

tural capital, long a liability to upward mobility, as an asset in ethnodevelopment. DeHart aptly captures both the promise and the pitfalls of such a perspective.

DeHart’s primary focus and two of three case studies look at development in primarily Maya areas of Guatemala (Totonicapán and environs). The third is a less geographically situated look at the short-lived Digital Diaspora project that sought to connect Latino entrepreneurs in the United States with Latin American counterparts.

The key case study, and really the heart of the book, focuses on the Maya NGO Cooperation for Rural Development of the West (CDRO) and the international “market” for NGO funding. CDRO is a self-consciously Maya development effort, with the goal of respecting and promoting Maya culture as a resource for, not a barrier to, development. CDRO’s symbol is the *pop*, or traditional woven mat, representing the integrated nature of Maya views of development. Even their organizational chart reflects this holistic view of interconnectedness, explicitly linked to Maya cosmology. Founded in 1984, CDRO grew rapidly in the 1990s, not least because their model fit perfectly with the shifts in development funding to local, indigenous, grassroots groups focused on environmental and economic sustainability.

The CDRO vision is compelling (esp. to anthropologists concerned with development and cultural rights), and they have started a number of successful projects, including a microfinance program called Banco Pop. Microfinance is neatly suited to the notion of interdependence that *pop* symbolizes: community funds, administered by communities, and cosigned by all.

But their successes have not been uncontroversial for the communities they represent to the outside funding world. As CDRO became ever more successful, criticisms emerged that they were not really concerned with the Mayaness of development but, rather, with selling their model and garnering all the perks of working for a successful NGO with international funding. DeHart reminds us that local representations are not as neat and clean as we might first think.

DeHart’s second case study looks at the impact of migration, remittances, and another sort of ethnic entrepreneur, in Santa Cecilia, a small K’iche’ Maya community outside of Totonicapán. From the late 1990s through the 2000s, a growing number of residents, mostly young men, migrated to the United States. Their remittances resulted in a local construction boom, visible in the two-story cinder block houses.

Migrants are often portrayed as inherently entrepreneurial: risk takers, investing in future returns, motivated, and aspirational. There is surely something to that portrayal, but it also feeds into a discourse that sees male migrants as agentic and dynamic, sending back

help to the passive and feminized community. DeHart shows that it is not so simple. Women's groups in Santa Cecilia are actively engaged in their own projects, such as a program to introduce improved stoves in houses. Still, as DeHart makes clear, remittances are imperfect tools for stimulating local economic growth, subtly reinforcing a notion that the most productive activities take place elsewhere.

DeHart's third case looks at the Digital Diaspora project led by a Seattle-based development organization and the UN Information and Communications Task Force. Modeled on the experience of Indian expatriates, the project sought to bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries through migrants. It was thought that Latino high-tech entrepreneurs in the United States could connect with and inspire counterparts in Latin America. As DeHart shows, this reflected a naïve understanding of what makes up the category of "Latino" and of the heterogeneity of Latin America. The case shows the dangers of "ethnic entrepreneur" stereotypes becoming solidified in development strategies, imputing ethnic affiliations with little basis in social relations.

For the most provocative piece in the book, DeHart returns to CDRO to look at a major project they developed in collaboration with Wal-Mart to market a line of natural spa products. CDRO had experience in small-scale production, but the link to Wal-Mart was of another level altogether, with promises of international expansion.

Remarkably, given CDRO's explicit culturalist agenda, the MABELI brand carried no indications of its ethnic origins (or what I call elsewhere "moral provenance"). Seeing the product on the shelf, one would have no indication of a Maya or NGO connection. For critics, this proved that CDRO was a business more than a grassroots NGO. But, as DeHart writes, "this new development strategy does not reflect radical shifts in the underlying forms of personhood and place that inform it; instead, the territorial space of community continues to be the moral ground for the production of ethnic subjects, even as that community identity is rearticulated in the production process" (p. 101).

Multisited ethnography is both necessary and difficult in the modern world. DeHart does an admirable job of pulling together the connections. While uneven in depth, the three cases illustrate the concept of "ethnic entrepreneur" in a way that adds significantly to research on development. Not shying away from the messy complexities of lived experience, DeHart shows the creative ways folks harness development projects and articulate with international funding and discursive trends—sometimes because of and sometimes despite the ethnic categorizations ascribed to them.

**Pushing for Midwives: Homebirth Mothers and the Reproductive Rights Movement.** *Christa Craven.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010. 208 pp.

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The push to increase access to midwives has gathered steam across North America over the last several decades. Unlike in many parts of the less-resourced world where midwifery continues to be the primary form of obstetrical care, and unlike in much of Europe where there has been an (albeit uneven) continuous presence of midwives, North America experienced an all-but-complete erasure of midwives during the middle of the 20th century. Activists across much of the United States and Canada are still fighting to bring midwifery care back into the fold of obstetrical care options for pregnant women and their families. The results of these struggles have been uneven, with tremendous success in some settings (many Canadian provinces with regulated and funded midwives) and with women in some North American states and provinces having little to no access to any kind of midwifery care. Writing against this backdrop, Christa Craven has set out to provide a rich history of women's reproductive healthcare activism in the United States, and to explore current strategies employed in organizing for reproductive rights—access to midwifery care central amongst them. At the heart of Craven's ethnography are questions about equity and access, about how even our most alternative and radical roads to change can have unintentionally marginalizing effects.

While operating as an ethnographic study, Craven's book offers a detailed historical analysis of the reproductive rights movement in the United States. Drawing on literature that highlights the racialized way in which the reproductive rights movement has fallen out in the United States, Craven seeks to distance herself from the romanticized link between midwifery activists of the 1960s and 1970s and the struggle of African American midwives at the turn of the last century in America, a link that has been previously critiqued within the literature, and to which Craven adds a strong and essential class analysis. The context provided serves to situate her more particular and focused study in a broader landscape, one that should be of relevance to a wide range of readers: those with interests in health care more generally, in women's reproductive health, in healthcare activism, as well as the more obvious interest in the field of midwifery.

Craven situates her ethnography in Virginia in part because of the social (particularly class) diversity of homebirthers who have been working toward the legalization of direct entry midwives in that state. Given Craven's interest

in how activism for reproductive rights (or the more current and, perhaps, more helpful term *reproductive justice* she draws on) works across differences of race and class, Virginia seems to have offered her fertile ground to explore socioeconomic diversity amongst homebirth mothers. She further identifies Virginia as a useful focus because of its relative success in the last decade in licensing and regulating midwives, the local successes serving as a source of inspiration and a model to others across the country.

While Craven documents the process of fighting for midwives in Virginia, making the book more relevant for American readers than it is for midwifery advocates in Canada, Europe, and other places where the fight for midwifery operates in a very different political and economic arena, it is her cautionary tale about the way activism takes place that offers some broader insights, both important and helpful for those engaged in all kinds of political work, in a variety of settings. In particular, Craven points to Virginia's experiences as potential learning opportunities not only in the terms of successful legislative change but also in terms of organizing strategies that may be more or less effective across differences of socioeconomic diversity. Craven questions and critically analyzes both the possibilities and (more often) the costs of drawing on "consumer rights" as a strategy for securing broader reproductive options for women in the United States. She questions the middle-class bias inherent in a consumer-rights approach pointing to who is, predictably, less able to exercise these consumer rights, a point that is both glaringly obvious yet not infrequently set aside in the face of the driving goal for legislative change.

Craven's attention throughout the book stays focused on issues of social justice and the inequities that continue to be reproduced even in the context of liberatory and progressive social movement. In this way, her book sits comfortably alongside other critiques that have sought both to explain, explore, and honor social change movements but also to acknowledge their limitations more clearly, to identify the ways in which they not only produce tangible social change but also may result in uneven outcomes that tend to reproduce status quo norms of social inequity.

Throughout the book, Craven does an excellent job of maintaining a sense of the multiple "histories" of midwifery in the United States. She avoids collapsing what were, in the end, quite distinct and unique (although also at times overlapping) paths for midwifery into a falsely uniform narrative. The differences between the experiences of African American midwives in the first part of the 20th century (as they were first "educated" and then, ultimately, "eliminated"), and the criminalization of lay midwifery more broadly, the resurgence of midwifery in the 1980s and 1990s, are carefully parsed out, allowing for thoughtful discussion of the ways in which race and class led to diverse contexts for midwives throughout the 20th century. In her own words, Craven is writing a "revised history of women's ac-

tivism for reproductive healthcare" (p. 25)—one that many of us should heed, not only for gathering a more textured picture of the past but also, as Craven suggests, with the goal of avoiding troublesome outcomes of activist work, that tend toward unequal division of benefits and gains.

In addition, and, yet, intimately linked to the focus on social inequities, Craven's attention turns to the pitfalls of drawing on a "consumer" identity as premise from which to agitate for social change. Her discussion of the costs of seeking to support midwifery as a consumer choice within the constraints of neoliberal capitalism does an excellent job of acknowledging who is more likely to benefit and who is more likely to be left out of a strategy that posits access to midwifery care as a consumer choice. Thus, access to the process of acting for social change risks mapping onto certain identities; it may sit less comfortably with those less likely to see themselves as consumers or who may see themselves at risk of state intervention for making "bad" consumer choices. Craven cautions that a social movement that is interested in organizing for the rights of all women, risks excluding a broad range of women who may never enter the market as consumers to begin with. Furthermore, the need to position homebirth mothers, the women who pushed to support midwifery practice in Virginia, as "respectable" and "good" mothers, while generating greater choice for some, also served to reinscribe rather than fundamentally challenge notions of women's rights to a diverse range of birthing options.

Craven's book makes an important contribution to critical analyses of the growth of midwifery in the United States—embedding a strong analysis of social class into reflections of the politics of making change.

**Sex and Salvation: Imagining the Future in Madagascar.**  
*Jennifer Cole.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.  
229 pp.

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This is a nicely ambitious and, simultaneously, nicely modest ethnography that attempts to explain generational and historical change—and how these two modes of examining change relate to each other (ambitious)—by analyzing the desires, strategies, and experiences of young women in Tamatave, Madagascar (more modest). It makes a superb addition to studies of youth, gender, and globalization and is highly suitable for classroom adoption because of the clarity of its presentation and the relatively short length (190 pages of text divided into eight chapters). Cole also brings to this ethnography a long history of research in Madagascar, as well as impressive archival work, giving depth and rigor to her arguments about social change in this context.

Cole focuses primarily on young women who choose to make use of their sexual allure as they strive for economic success and social mobility. Many of the stories are about women trying to acquire European husbands or managing multiple Malagasy boyfriends as a means to obtain money, desirable consumer items, and, possibly, the chance to make a life overseas. This story may not seem terribly new given the recent wealth of research on love, sex, marriage, and globalization, but what makes Cole's analysis powerful and memorable is the way that she rawly conveys how the humiliations of poverty propel young women's choices. As Cole notes,

All interactions—no matter how apparently trivial—[can] be used to make people feel inadequate because they [lack] material resources. . . . That poor people do not deserve love, attention, or respect was a lesson many people learned daily . . . [Urbanites] implied that those who “have” are more worthwhile, while those who are poor are regarded as worthless, and often feel they are. This social status is expressed in such terms as “having no meaning” (*tsy misy dikany*) or “not considered” (*tsy consideré*). [pp. 47–48]

Most of the cases that Cole examines are not about “survival sex” but, rather, about escaping the anxiety of not having enough and, more importantly, escaping the emotional hell of being regularly assessed and dismissed as a social nonentity. Intense consumerism has clearly pervaded social life in Tamatave, and I was struck by how thoroughly it has come to shape how people value or devalue their kin, peers, neighbors, and themselves. Thus, underneath what Cole describes as “dilapidated colonial splendour” is a social world roiling with bruised feelings and resentment as people routinely size each other up and slight those who are of no interest or use because they have little money.

Cole analyzes this situation with great care and nuance, showing that it has roots in the past and is not a wholesale transformation of sociality. For example, in rural areas, where many urbanites come from, “a full-fledged adult uses the generative capacities bestowed by the ancestors to ‘make oneself, one’s spouse, and one’s children living’ ” (p. 52). In other words, full personhood is defined as being able to meet the needs of others and to participate in ongoing relationships of reciprocal care and material support. Those who are unable to carry out this work have long been seen as inferior, childlike, or slavlike. What has changed is that in the urban context, it is money and consumer goods that make up the currency of care and material support, and, thus, the currency of emotional and social connection. And, of course, in a context of un- and underemployment, many people find themselves struggling to carry out this basic task of full personhood. As Cole notes, “Those who have less to give are also likely to receive less: their poverty both signals and reproduces a lack of significant connection to

others” (p. 58). Thus, “to be poor is to be triply damned: it is to be perceived as someone who is unloved, unmodern, and inferior” (p. 69).

And, as may be common throughout the world, it is the young—most knowledgeable about what it takes to be au courant in fashion, technology and popular culture, but least able to secure this lifestyle—who both inflict and suffer these humiliations of poverty most acutely. Cole's young informants, male and female, know just what model of cell phone they should own and what style of clothing they should wear, and they mercilessly monitor each other, keeping track of who owns or wears the right things, who does not, and who tries to pull off pathetic approximations. And all of this is made much more painful by the fact that most of them have no money, no assets, no job, and few means of achieving the lifestyle to which they aspire. Moreover, schooling is no longer the reliable means to social mobility that it once was: as “diplomas no longer guaranteed employment, education also came to be understood as an ineffective strategy for finding one's way to productive adulthood” (p. 94).

Given this situation, it is not surprising that young women turn to sex to obtain the things that enable them to be “considered” and that are associated with being both modern and socially valued. Again, Cole makes clear that although these young women walk a fine line between being admired and being stigmatized as disreputable, the use of feminine sexual allure is hardly new: “any young woman in Tamatave knows that to build up a respectable position in society, she must acquire money, food, clothes, even housing in part through her relationships with men. . . . From early on, girls learn to exercise their powers of seduction, and . . . they are proud that they can do so” (p. 79). What is perhaps less traditional is women's juggling of many male sexual partners to obtain coveted goods, as well as some young women's explicit rejection of marriage as necessary for respectability.

Cole nicely lays out a variety of trajectories for women depending on the kinds of backgrounds they come from, their ability to exploit their sexuality, and the children or boyfriends who sometimes derail their plans for social mobility. Most important to Cole's examination of generational and historical change are *jeunes*—youth who are perceived, and perceive themselves, as sloughing of the weight of tradition, aligning themselves with all that symbolizes economic success, and following the latest fashions in clothing, music, technology, and intimate relationships. Cole makes clear that even as *jeunes* have become a powerfully ambivalent symbol of social change—admired for their association with progress while blamed for the loss of Malagasy culture—it is hard to find *jeunes* who are *jeunes* all the time. Although they are spoken of as a category of person, in fact for many young people being *jeune* is a performance they can pull off at some times and not at others: “A young man

or woman may use commodities to project the status they aspire to while not actually having access to a sustained or stable flow of resources” (p. 110). Through these performances they hope to make the social connections—with Europeans or with genuinely affluent Malagasy patrons or sexual partners—that will enable them to achieve their aspirations for wealth and sophistication.

For me the most compelling aspect of this ethnography was Cole’s careful attention to emotion. Although much of the discourse, of *jeunes* and others, focuses on material progress, material lack, and material striving, Cole incisively captures how these material situations make people feel, and how these feelings drive people’s decisions and actions. As she says, “emotions enter historical process long before they ever become visible in uprisings, revolutions, or elections. Neither love and anger nor the sharing and withholding of resources are topics to be analyzed after the real work of examining socioeconomic or political change is done. Rather, they are the mediums through which individuals participate in and contribute to these changes” (pp. 188–189).

**Guadalupe in New York: Devotion and the Struggle for Citizenship Rights among Mexican Immigrants.** *Alyshia Gálvez*. New York: New York University Press, 2010. 237 pp.

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Over the past decade the field of immigration studies has been reinvigorated by scholarship that examines the intersection of religion and the new immigration. The large influx of new immigrants to the United States has led sociologists and anthropologists to study how religious beliefs, practices, and institutions contribute to political mobilization and advocacy for the rights of undocumented immigrants. For Mexican and other Latino immigrants, Catholic churches and interfaith organizations play a vital role in organizing religious people for immigrant civil rights activism and providing venues for new immigrants to acquire civic skills. As scholars such as Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Jacqueline Hagan have shown, anti-immigrant policies and militarized borders have heightened the importance of faith and everyday religious practices as cultural resources to confront the risks involved in migration and to contest state policies that criminalize undocumented immigrants. As a result, religion, as Cecilia Menjivar states, “has moved beyond the confines of worship, spirituality, and ritual” (2007:106) to inform public awareness and policy about immigrant rights.

*Guadalupe in New York* contributes to this body of scholarship through the lens of cultural citizenship. While recent scholarship on religion and new immigration ex-

amines how religion shapes political mobilization for immigrant rights, Alyshia Gálvez focuses on how Our Lady of Guadalupe devotional practices provide undocumented immigrants the tools, language, and moral grounds to develop a collective sense of self-worth, belonging, and solidarity to condemn punitive U.S. immigration legislation and challenge exclusionary notions of citizenship defined by the state. Based on ethnographic research conducted in the Bronx, the book describes the activities of Guadalupan organizations at two local parishes and *Asociación Tepeyac*, an influential umbrella organization that when founded in 1997 used Catholic Liberation Theology to organize the Mexican faithful in New York City. Highly revered in Mexico, the Virgin of Guadalupe is an ideal vehicle to represent the plight of undocumented immigrants and articulate alternative inclusionary notions of citizenship in moral terms, Gálvez argues. Elaborating on Renato Rosaldo’s and Aihwa Ong’s conceptualization of cultural citizenship as a process of self-making, Gálvez shows that immigrant parishioners both transform and are transformed by the moral principles of Catholic Humanism to build a sense of citizenship based on universal human rights. Unlike other studies that document how immigrants learn basic civil and political skills in parish organizations, Gálvez claims immigrants’ religious devotions are themselves political weapons that empower them; rather than being precursors of civic and political participation, the Guadalupan devotional practices convey claims for social and political rights, even if couched in apparently innocuous religious terms (pp. 185–188).

The ethnography of several devotions is the most attractive and insightful part of the book. Chapter 4 discusses how immigrants imagine themselves as Juan Diego, to whom they believe the Virgin originally appeared, thereby reaffirming their sacred value as human beings worthy of rights. Many immigrants never belonged to a church in Mexico and it is their shared experience of discrimination in the United States that leads them to involvement in activities that interpret the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe as one of social justice. Immigrants thus rediscover the tradition of Liberation Theology that helped shape the Chicano struggle for equality in the 1970s. Chapter 5 provides a rich description of how the Viacrucis—an important Catholic tradition commemorating Christ Passion and death on Good Friday—is creatively reenacted by parishioners in Manhattan as “El Viacrucis del Inmigrante” (Immigrants’ Viacrucis) by altering its traditional script to symbolize the humiliations suffered by undocumented immigrants as they come and settle in the United States. Part of the procession organized by *Asociación Tepeyac*, for instance, takes place outside the offices of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service where instead of the traditional cry, “Walk thief, king of Jews!,” the participants shout, “Walk, walk illegal” (p. 131). The Viacrucis performed in public spaces, Gálvez tells us, are aimed not so much at

gaining moral support among Americans, as they are at forming a sense of belonging and community among immigrants than can be mobilized for political empowerment. Chapter 6 vividly depicts a binational Guadalupan torch run from the Basilica in Mexico City to Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, symbolizing the idea of a transnational Mexican community and a notion of citizenship not constrained by borders.

Gálvez presents one of the most insightful analyses I have read of the subtle yet powerful ways in which Catholic traditions are imaginatively recast by Mexican immigrants to symbolically contest policies that exclude and criminalize them. She convincingly shows that they do not simply transplant their homeland traditions but creatively resignify them to be meaningful to their personal and collective experiences. Like Kathleen Coll's (2010) recent study of the struggles of Latina immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area to redefine the concept of citizenship, *Guadalupe in New York* makes an important contribution to recent debates about the notion of flexible and postnational citizenship, showing that religious activities are an important yet understudied dimension of Mexican immigrants' cultural politics.

While the ethnography of the devotional practices is convincingly done, I was left with the question of whether, or to what extent, Guadalupan religiosity fuels political activism beyond parish activities. A fuller portrayal of the Guadalupans' lives and their civic participation could have strengthened Gálvez's claim that religious activities serve as vehicles for political consciousness and empowerment. Also, the theoretical discussion of citizenship overshadows the understated contributions of the book to current debates on new immigrants and religion, particularly regarding how immigrants transform religious and other cultural practices when they settle in the United States.

In sum, *Guadalupe in New York* makes a valuable and timely contribution to immigration, citizenship, and religious studies. The book vividly demonstrates the power of ethnography to illuminate the symbolic meaning of everyday religiosity. It is engaging reading for scholars, students, and activists who want to understand how Mexican immigrants' religious beliefs and practices speak about their plights and claims. In the current hostile climate against Latino immigrants, Alyshia Gálvez helps us envision a more humane understanding of citizenship to address the exclusion and discrimination undocumented immigrants encounter.

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**The Dictator's Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the Era of Trujillo.** *Lauren Derby*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 410 pp.

**STEVEN GREGORY**

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While doing research in the Dominican Republic in 2001, I befriended a 28-year-old man who made his living selling cigars to tourists. One day, Manolo called me over to his makeshift stand and pointed to the Hamaca Beach Hotel and Casino—a massive, all-inclusive resort that dominates Boca Chica's white sand beach. Speaking in a hushed voice, Manolo told me that there were secret compartments within the bowels of the luxurious hotel that had been used by former dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo as torture chambers and as a workshop for “El Jefe's” team of *brujos*, or sorcerers. In fact, Trujillo had constructed the Hamaca Hotel in 1952 as part of a largely unsuccessful effort to jump-start the Dominican tourism industry in the prosperous post-World War II era. Manolo's assertion, which I would later learn was a widely circulated rumor, expressed the intuition that, beneath the veneer of progress and prosperity during the Trujillato existed a nucleus of terror, intimidation, and symbolic violence.

Lauren Derby's pathfinding book, *The Dictator's Seduction*, examines the cultural politics of domination in one of the most corrupt, repressive, and enduring dictatorships in the Western Hemisphere. In contrast to “statist” approaches that have tended to focus on the Trujillo regime's formal apparatus of violence and repression, Derby interrogates the porous boundaries of state power within civil society and the loci of politics, directing attention to “vernacular forms of domination” that were insinuated into daily life. Derby brilliantly demonstrates how Trujillo harnessed “popular idioms of masculinity, personhood, and fantasies of race and class mobility” (p. 7) to engorge his image and power, and to win the practical consent of the Dominical populace.

Trujillo, who rose to power in the wake of the United States occupation, ruled the Dominican Republic from 1930 until his assassination in May 1961. In fact, the American occupation (1916–22) had contributed to his rise to power: the loss of sovereignty, soaring national debt, and economic dependence on the United States strengthened calls by conservative nationalists for a “Neitzschean superman” who could rescue the nation by restoring political sovereignty and by ushering in an era of economic progress. As Joaquín

Balaguer put it, “Progress, in the countries formed by Spain . . . never has been an intellectual creation; it has always been, on the contrary, a product of the evolution imposed by Caesaristic willpower” (p. 64). Trujillo would supply that will.

In contrast to populist regimes in Latin America that expressed their affinity to the people through symbolic forms of identification and leveling—the Perón regime in Argentina, for example—the Trujillato promised to elevate and civilize the illiterate masses in the image of El Jefe. For this reason, Derby argues, Trujillo became “a master symbol of Dominican identity” (p. 111) and authority within the regime was based on proximity to the dictator. This proximity was as much symbolic as it was bureaucratic and the regime staged extravagant spectacles that conjured up fantasies of national progress and social mobility—fantasies consumed at home and publicized in the foreign media.

For example, in 1937, Trujillo elevated his mistress, Lina Lovatón, to Carnival queen in an extravagant ceremony that mimicked the courtly rituals of the European aristocracy. Derby describes the event:

The carnival recreated the state in ritual form through its women, using as a pretext a two-month long feudal masquerade ball. Her majesty Queen Lina stood at the apex, with a court of princesses of her choosing, nearly all of whom were the daughters of functionaries. Next in line came the ladies of honor and the ambassadors to Lina’s court, each of whom represented a province. Each princess also had her own court. [pp. 116–117]

Derby is quick to point out that this female-centered ritual was not intended to celebrate popular licentiousness or, for that matter, to honor the nation’s women. Rather, the carefully scripted carnival marshaled elite women across the sectors of Dominican society to proclaim and display the manliness of El Jefe as “savior of the nation”; or, as Queen Lina not so euphemistically put it, “as inexhaustible sower” (p. 119). In fact, the culminating event of the 1937 festivities was the unveiling of a 40-meter-high obelisk to pay homage to Trujillo for rebuilding the capital after the catastrophic hurricane of 1930. The obelisk, as Derby suggests, provided a phallic counterpoint and closure to Queen Lina and her opulent, albeit short-lived, court.

These rituals of power and manliness—and they were numerous and widespread—existed within a wider transactional web of exchanges that drew on popular notions of reciprocal gift exchange and trickled down to the meanest ranks of Dominican society. Just as the families of Queen Lina’s court were obliged to respond with obedience, deference, and whatever else was required of them to repay El Jefe’s favor, Dominican society as a whole became entangled in the dictator’s networks of patronage politics. To his inner circle, Trujillo conferred honors, land grants, state monopolies, and other perks as personal gifts; to the masses

the regime distributed food, money, artificial limbs, television sets, and other goods in ceremonies that were often presided over by Trujillo. Derby demonstrates that these widespread, official benefits masked domination in the language and symbolism of family, friendship, and balanced reciprocity; failure to reciprocate to the satisfaction of El Jefe could, and very often did, result in stigma, denunciation, and reprisal.

Derby provides a compelling analysis of the ways in which Trujillo and his cronies used official discourse to intimidate, distance, and destroy potential enemies or, more generally, those who had fallen out of favor. Derby examines two discursive genres that were widely publicized, particularly in the capital city, Ciudad Trujillo: denunciation and highly stylized panegyric, or praise speech. A key venue for this discursive politics was the Foro Público (Public Forum) column in the newspaper *El Caribe*, the mouthpiece of the regime. Whereas the effusive praise of the “Benefactor” in the Foro Público provided a means to curry favor and rewards from the Trujillato (or redeem a sullied reputation), denunciations, typically backed by rumor and innuendo, projected the regime’s apparatus of surveillance into the fabric of civil society. No government functionary or citizen was beyond reproach and above suspicion.

*The Dictator’s Seduction* is a masterful analysis and Derby’s contribution to our understanding of the Trujillato and, more generally, political culture cannot be adequately summarized here. Informed by extensive historical and ethnographic research, and ripe with insightful cultural analysis, Derby’s book stretches across disciplines and topical specializations. For example, the book’s final chapter, based in part on Derby’s ethnographic research, explores a millenarian movement, the Olivorista community, that took shape in the wake of Trujillo’s assassination. Taking its name from Dios Olivorio Mateo Ledesma, a faith healer and martyr assassinated by the U.S. Marines in 1922, Derby views the movement as articulating a popular “fantasy of the state” that reveals how the excesses of state craft under Trujillo were elaborated in the Dominican imagination. Despite the brutality of the Trujillato and the pervasiveness of its everyday practices of domination, Dominicans, Derby aptly demonstrates, did see through its foundational fantasies and imagine a more just society and moral economy

**Girls of the Factory: A Year with the Garment Workers of Morocco.** *M. Laetitia Cairolí.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011. 264 pp.

**KATHERINE E. HOFFMAN**

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This highly readable narrative chronicles the author’s fieldwork among young Moroccan women working in the garment factories of Fes. Through participant-observation that



included three months of tedious labor in one factory, Cairoli explores not only the nature of the labor performed but also, more importantly, the sense these young women made of the work and how it fit into to their relationships, especially as “dutiful daughters.” The young women saw factory work and marriage as the two mutually exclusive life choices available to them. They were mostly poor, un-schooled, or only marginally schooled; aged between their early teens to late twenties; unmarried; and childless. They aspired to marriage, children, and running a household under the authority of an employed husband, yet not at such a young age as to prevent them from seeing a few places and learning about the world outside their neighborhoods. Garment factory work was perceived to be incompatible with marriage for it was highly irregular work requiring long hours, unpredictable schedules, unexpected pay deductions, and submission to the factory owner and to production deadlines that seemed capricious and, yet, were tightly enforced. Workers were literally locked in to the factory when the day’s work started, and their movements there were closely controlled.

To the workers, the inconveniences of this tedious and stressful work were offset by the benefit of a meager income and the freedom to control at least some of their movement in the city’s streets once their workday finished, a freedom not enjoyed by other modest young women of the lower and working classes who were closely monitored by fathers and brothers. While turning over their earnings to their mothers, the workers managed to pocket small amounts for lipstick or a doughnut from time to time, increasing, from their perspective, their quality of life. The young women considered the factory owners to be good people and therefore would never ask for better pay or improved conditions, seemingly oblivious to the owners’ strategy of engaging floor managers in a good cop–bad cop dynamic that increased worker loyalty. To the factory owners and managers, these young women were compliant, inexpensive, and replaceable.

Among this book’s many strengths are the vivid descriptions of the factory working conditions: the cold and humidity of the unheated cement factory space in winter, the physical illness that results from breathing fibers in a closed space all day, the boredom and dread of rising early in the morning to begin tedious manual labor, and the anxiety around potential sanctions for not performing the garment work correctly or fast enough. The reader comes away from descriptions of the actual labor itself with a clear sense that the labor is only tolerable because of the sociability and friendships among coworkers laboring under the father figure of the factory owner and the disciplining older sibling-like managers. For most of these young women, factory work exposed them for the first time to individuals and experiences outside the small circles of their extended families and neighborhoods. The mere exposure was valuable and allowed for broader perspectives than they would have

by staying home, yet the workers invariably saw factory work as a temporary activity that would end once they were married. Interestingly, while the daily commute afforded these workers access to meeting men on the streets—men who were eager to talk with unchaperoned young women—workers insisted that meeting a potential husband on the street was unbecoming of a modest Muslim women.

Here and throughout the text, the author describes her encounters with the workers in such a way that readers can draw their own conclusions about the relationship between stated moral norms and actions. The author’s voice remains neutral in such moments and does not try to resolve the apparent contradictions. The patriarchy that limited her informants’ movements, similarly, is presented neutrally despite the fieldworker’s attempts to query her female informants to explore their moral endorsement of the right of husbands, brothers, and fathers to give or deny permission for women’s movements. The neutrality allows the reader to understand women’s choices given the constraints within which they live and the perceived choices available to them.

The book also does an excellent job of depicting the daily activities, preoccupations, and moral perspectives of these young factory women. It convincingly demonstrates that these preoccupations revolve around human relationships rather than work. The conversations and descriptions of women’s friendships and family relations are realistically and thoroughly described. The author’s empathetic yet powerless stance in the face of these women’s problems and illnesses is brutally honest; she strikingly admits to disliking much of the fieldwork and to knowing she will not return to her field site or to the friendships she made there.

This admission underscores her largely successful effort to convey the travails of these factory workers in a form accessible to undergraduate students, but she sidesteps the issue of how their experiences are part of the broader contemporary projects of neoliberalism and globalization. Such a discussion could extend the book’s relevance beyond Morocco and undergraduates in introductory courses and into crucial anthropological conversations about globalization, capital, and gender. The use of young, poor, female labor for highly precarious and underpaid manual labor as employees for subcontractors in the international garment industry is common throughout the developing world. In Morocco, girl-women, some of whom have not even reached puberty and do not yet fast for Ramadan, make the clothes for European clothing lines. The Europeans subcontracting the factories do not want to see workers wearing headscarves, for a headscarf does not conform to their sensibilities, but those same sensibilities seem indifferent to child labor, which is often initially unpaid labor.

Cairoli’s text gives us insight into this industry as experienced by those whose labor makes outsourcing possible. The text demonstrates the ways in which industry capitalizes on the social relations and gendered labor expectations

already in place in patriarchal societies, ensuring a labor force with disincentives to organize, strike, or even complain. This is a book that will make readers look twice at the labels inside their clothes and wonder about the age of the agile hands that clipped its loose threads. It will urge readers to think about the fear of the box packers unjustly suspected of theft, and the futility of pushes for minimum wages in places where no enforcement can ensure their application. As a compelling narrative of lives closely observed, it is an effective exposé of the ugly underbelly of globalized labor.

**The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti.** *Kate Ramsey.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. xix + 425 pp.

**ANDREW APTER**

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Kate Ramsey tells a fascinating story of antisuperstition legislation in Haiti that evolved from the colonial period and remained on the books until the 1987 overthrow of “Baby Doc” Duvalier. This is not a study of the Haitian revolution but, rather, concerns the postcolonial struggles of a marginalized republic eager to disavow its “barbarism” and champion its own modernity.

The core of the book—chapters 2, 3, and 4—relates ambiguities within “vodou” to the political entities and social factions that have contested its legal boundaries. In its particular or marked sense, vodou distinguishes itself as Ginen, a Dahomean-derived set of affirmative ritual practices, from the various forms of sorcery and “left-handed magic” denoted by such terms as *macandals*, *guyons*, *donpèdre*, *ouangas*, sometimes classified together as Petwo spirits. Good Ginen is positively valued against its degenerate magical and illegal forms. In its general or unmarked sense, however, vodou combines all of its practices within an inclusive master trope, one that was disclaimed by church and state until the liberalization of the Code Noir in 1935 under President Sténio Vincent. How did vodou’s positive meaning collapse into an overriding negative definition, Ramsey asks? How, in effect, did the positive baby get thrown out with the negative bathwater?

The answer is important because it underscores vodou’s Creole origins and the contested terrain on which its meanings and legality played out. As Ramsey explains, the term itself appears to have two roots; one European, from a medieval French heretical sect (Vaudois), the other from Dahomean ethnolinguistic groups, as argued by Jean Price-Mars. Here I feel that Ramsey overestimates the correctness of the Dahomean etymology (although see her note 16, p. 259) and overlooks the possibility that those references to “vodun” deities documented by Maupoil and

Herskovits in the 1930s may reflect the impact of French Catholic missionaries in colonial Dahomey.

Rather than take sides on which etymology is correct, however, it might be better to acknowledge the dual European and African heritage in what became the paradigmatically Creole New World tradition; one that lent itself to a semantics of generalization (European heretical meaning) and particularization (Dahomean Ginen or Rada) according to political, religious, and class locations. Indeed, Ramsey’s fascinating exploration of persecutors and persecuted bears this out. If the state, the church, and the French-speaking elites deployed the all-inclusive denigrating term, attacking even professed Catholics accused of *le mélange*, rural folk and peasant practitioners defended themselves by distinguishing “true tradition” from malicious magic. As we follow Ramsey’s rich discussions of the anti-superstition campaigns waged by the church (late 1890s), the state (mid-1860s), the U.S. Marines (1915–34), and both church and state in the late 1930s and early 1940s, we learn that such pervasive high and low oppositions were not the only salient distinctions at play. Local rural constituencies also deployed claims of sorcery and superstition against rival vodou temples (*hounfort*), gaining juridical capital by using the law against others. And during the U.S. occupation, when American companies like HASCO produced a landless labor force, no better representation of an alienated proletariat could be found than the ensuing epidemic of ensorcelled zombies.

Complicating the legal challenges and ritual ripostes beyond elites and masses would be a worthy enough contribution of *The Spirits and the Law*, but it goes further by pushing the dialectics of contestation and engagement into historic trajectories of mimetic appropriation. Throughout Ramsey’s book the enemies of vodou are variably attracted to what they prohibit. Amid the din of denigration the reader hears elite voices of appreciation; this before the Harlem Renaissance or French Primitivism revalued the aesthetics of the colonized. But nowhere is the appropriation of the primitive better magnified than in the careers of those U.S. Marines who became vodou specialists, and, in some cases, priests, while waging brutal campaigns against “voodoo” insurgency. Characters like warrant officer Faustin Wirkus, who was immortalized as “The White King of La Gonâve” in William Seabrook’s *The Magic Island* (1920), provide the clearest cases of a “voodoo” sensationalized in national best-sellers and Hollywood films. Ramsey’s discussion of Wirkus’s lost film *Voodoo* (1933), which used actual members of the *sosyete kongo* (Congo Society) into which he himself was inducted to stage “authentic” barbaric practices, shows how blurring the boundaries between real and surreal characterized the marketing of voodoo as a commodity form. Nor were such mystical reversals one-sided. As Ramsey reminds us, some of the U.S. Marines whose unchecked violence inspired a U.S. Senate

investigation also entered the vodou spirit-pantheon, ritually remaining on active duty.

As the United States withdrew from Haiti in 1934, Haiti's resurgent sovereignty involved a national transformation of vodou "barbarism" into a civilized if sanitized national culture. In chapter 4, Ramsey shifts from the logic of mimesis to that of surrogation, whereby the nation celebrated its cultural traditions with sanitized "substitutes" of those ceremonies and practices which "themselves" remained illegal. In a fascinating exploration of the politics of such staging, Ramsey shows how Clément Benoit pushed the cultural vanguard beyond its limits by including the sacrifice of a cock on stage, breaking the frame of sanitized surrogation as well as the law itself. Ramsey relates this ontological disconnect between tradition and its national representation to parallel developments in the ethnography of Haiti, when such luminaries as Herskovits, Dunham, Courlander, and Métraux—stymied by laws against "real" vodou rites—resorted to staged renditions or even oral descriptions as the basis of their scientific accounts. Such a deconstruction of ethnography's epistemic frame, accentuated by the politics of state repression, may well shed light on the feedback loops between ethnography and national culture more generally.

If *The Spirits and the Law* is a brilliant book, it is not flawless. The productive tension between the *lwa* and the law could be framed more ambitiously in relation to theories of state fetishism and legal performativity; the state itself as an agent of antisuperstition campaigns could be analyzed more dynamically as it developed over time, with greater attention to the role of political parties and regional elites in negotiating the application of the laws. One hears two expository voices, one more sober and empiricist, the other more dazzling and daring, usually complementary but sometimes at odds in Ramsey's exposition. But no book does everything, and hers remains a tour de force in the historical anthropology of Haitian vodou and the paradoxes of modernity that it so vividly manifests.

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**Babies without Borders: Adoption and Migration across the Americas.** *Karen Dubinsky*. New York: New York University Press, 2010. 204 pp.

## KRISTA E. VAN VLEET

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Anthropologists, sociologists, historians, and other scholars have increasingly turned attention to the practice of

adoption: the movement of children within and, especially, across national boundaries is not only more prevalent but also more visible in the contemporary moment because of changing social and cultural practices, legal codes, and political-economic relationships. Adoption and fostering are also "good to think with"—these practices which exist in various forms across the globe challenge us to understand the ways that all people everywhere "do family" (Rothman 2005:5–6); the power hierarchies that naturalize particular configurations of kinship; and the ways that state institutions and global circulations of goods, people, and ideas are implicated in the purported intimacies of everyday life. To this scholarly discourse Karen Dubinsky contributes a comparative framework in *Babies without Borders*. She invites readers to reflect on the political symbolism of "the child" as mobilized in Canada, Cuba, Guatemala, and the United States from the 1950s to the end of the 20th century.

Dubinsky, a historian, argues that children are "nothing if not representational" (p. 5) and describes three symbolic frames that structure public discourse about children and their movements in the Americas. The "National Baby" of 1960s Cuba and United States, the "Hybrid Baby" of 1960s and 1970s Canada, and the "Missing Baby" of 1980s and 1990s Guatemala emerge as the focal points of each of three substantive chapters. *Babies without Borders* begins with a synthetic introduction that traces some connections between each of these symbolic babies and ends with short reflexive conclusion.

The first substantive chapter explores discourses of kidnap and rescue as they played out during the Cold War in Cuba and the United States through the symbolism of the "National Baby." Between 1961 and 1962 Cuban parents sent over 14,000 children under the age of 16 to the United States. Dubbed "Operation Peter Pan" by the U.S. media, the campaign was organized by the Catholic Church in Miami and Havana, the CIA, and anti-Castro forces in Cuba. Dubinsky examines the series of rumors within Cuba that children would be kidnapped and sent to the Soviet Union for indoctrination (or worse), Castro's responses to these rumors, and U.S. overt and covert immigration policies that brought tens of thousands of Cuban exiles into the United States, including unaccompanied minors. Initially housed in temporary camps in Florida, about half of the children were sent into long-term foster care and orphanages throughout the United States. Although many families were reunited after a 1965 agreement between the United States and Cuba, the abrogation of parental rights by the U.S. government meant that many families were not. The legacy of Peter Pan erupted in 1999 when a young boy, Elián González, was found off the coast of Florida and relatives and community members in Miami (unsuccessfully) campaigned to keep the child in the United States rather than return him to the custody of his father in Cuba. The media frenzy over Elián González forefronts Dubinsky's contention: "When international or foreign

policy conflicts are fought through and over the bodies of children, the enormous but often unacknowledged symbolic power of children ensures that such conflicts have a very long life" (p. 8).

The second chapter considers the development of interracial adoption in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s and the ways that adoption advocates mobilized the symbol of the "Hybrid Baby" as part of an international discourse on racial integration and civil rights. Dubinsky bases her discussion on close readings of Montreal's Open Door Society, an early advocate for interracial adoption, and records from adoption agencies in Montreal and Winnipeg that worked with black and Native children, respectively. She explores how agencies and adoptive parents framed the adoption of black children through discourses of liberalism and rescue, failed interracial romance, and immigrant women's limited labor options. The more contentious debates around interracial adoption in the United States act as a foil to the claims to racial liberalism in Canada. Finally, Dubinsky considers how the adoption of aboriginal children was understood differently from that of black children. She examines the "sixties scoop" in which thousands of Native children were removed from the custody of their parents—many of whom had been forcefully removed from their families to boarding schools in earlier decades. Reflecting on the "contradictions in (and profound racialization of) the production of normative parenthood [that] leaps from the social work archive" (p. 83), Dubinsky adds her voice to that of several scholars (incl. Laura Briggs, Dorothy Roberts, Heidi Kiiwetinepi-siik Stark and Kekek Jason Todd Stark, and Rickie Solinger) who encourage a closer look at the overrepresentation of certain children in the child welfare system and the inconsistencies in the mobilization of the "Hybrid Baby."

Finally, Dubinsky explores the "Missing Child" with a focus on transnational adoption in Guatemala. As a "sending" country, a nation from which children circulate, Guatemala has attained notoriety in the international media because of potentially corrupt adoption practices. Until 2007 laws allowing decentralized procedures enabled lawyers to reap a great deal of profit. Moreover, rumors circulating within Guatemala of foreign adopted children being used for sexual slavery or killed for their organs has prompted national debate, lynching of tourists for purported baby theft, and government inquiries. Dubinsky's position as an adoptive parent of a child born in Guatemala provides a subtle subtext to this chapter, but more significant to her explanation of this iconic baby is the historical context of the civil war, 30 years of violence that included genocide and the state-sponsored rape, and the overdetermined relationship between the United States and Guatemala during this period. Dubinsky makes clear that although social upheaval, war, and poverty create precarious conditions for children in Guatemala, and across the Americas, the "Missing Baby" draws on public fears and po-

litical anxieties to create an image of childhood that partly obscures individual children's lives.

As Dubinsky notes, "The symbolic child isn't a recent invention. However, the move towards a globalized notion of 'childhood' through the twentieth century has created many more opportunities for national self-definition through the bodies of children" (p. 6). An excellent book for scholars of family, Latin America, children, and political symbolism, anthropologists will recognize that the book is not an ethnography. The focus is resolutely on political discourses about children culled from archival media sources and institutional records rather than interviews, narratives, or participant-observation focused on the daily social interactions and political-economic relationships among children or between parents and children in the Americas. In tracing the complex set of discourses around these "symbolic babies," including discourses of kidnap and rescue, Dubinsky at times seems to assume much of her readers: Little background information on the history of adoption (and child welfare); on whom adopts, whom relinquishes children, and whom is adopted; on informal fostering practices; or on the structuring of class, gender, and race in various historical and national contexts is provided. However, the book is particularly appealing for how it develops an integrated perspective on the Americas—examining specific international relationships within chapters and imbricating North America and Latin America in the book as a whole. Moreover, by reformulating the dichotomy of kidnap and rescue and intertwining popular press and media texts with narrative history, *Babies without Borders* offers unique perspective onto the eminently public production of intimate relationships through the movement of children, both real and symbolic.

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**Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight against AIDS.** *Deborah B. Gould*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. 524 pp.

## RICHARD JOSEPH MARTIN

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In *Moving Politics*, sociologist Deborah B. Gould analyzes the rise and fall of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), a direct-action activist organization in which she was a participant. Gould aligns herself with the emotional turn in social movement theory, poised as a corrective to the absence of emotion in rational actor models. Within this

turn, Gould notes, the importance of affect is absent, and distinctions between feeling(s) and emotion(s) tend to be minimized (pp. 18–19; for discussions of affect in current anthropological work see, for example, Stewart 2007). Likewise, building on Bourdieusian claims about correlations between position and disposition, Gould utilizes the term *emotional habitus*, highlighting the socially mediated, conventional aspects of emotional articulations that might otherwise get read, in the context of the United States in the late 20th century, as individual. One of the major theoretical contributions of this work, then, consists in the nuanced discussion of these terms and their deployment in support of the book's overarching thesis, that the trajectory of the ACT UP movement's efficacy is explicable in terms of historically situated discursive shifts in culturally salient queer emotional habitus, from shame to anger to despair.

Although I hesitate to summarize, because doing so will no doubt flatten certain distinctions and nuances to which the author is so admirably attentive, here are what I take to be key moments in each step of the book's arch. In the first two chapters, Gould registers an emotional shift from shame to anger that, she argues, unifies and galvanizes queers, thus creating the conditions of possibility for the kind of activists that those joining ACT UP were to become. Chapter 1 situates the mantra of "pride" in early gay and lesbian activism as an antidote to socially predominant discourses of shame. The emotional register of shame, she contends, was not conducive to the sort of confrontational activism ACT UP came to represent, as evidenced by Larry Kramer's call-to-action's failure to gain traction in the early 1980s. Because anger was not quite yet on the "political horizon," she suggests, Kramer's arguments were interpreted according to the discourse of shame, so that his words registered more as sexophobic than radically queer. Anger, she writes in chapter 2, came to be mobilized in the aftermath of *Bowers v. Hardwick*, the 5–4 1986 Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of anti-homosexual sodomy statutes, an outcome that "intensified lesbian and gay anger rather than shame and encouraged confrontational activism rather than staying the course" (p. 142). The salience of anger thus engendered and sustained this community of activists during the period in which ACT UP flourished.

Chapters 3 and 4 highlight the world-making aspects of the ACT UP movement. These affective dimensions, Gould argues, account for how the organization attracted and sustained the interest of participants. She writes: "ACT UP's emotional pedagogy offered new ways for queer folks to feel about themselves, about dominant society, and about political possibilities amid the AIDS crisis" (p. 215). This pedagogy offered queers alternative valorizations to mainstream aspirations in the domains of erotics and humor, and effectively channeled feelings of grief into articulations of anger. These chapters present a compelling narrative of

the effective mobilization of the affective dimensions of disposition, which might be read by anthropologists as a response to Sherry Ortner's call for "cross-fertilization between the more sociologically oriented practice accounts" and "more richly textured accounts of emotion and motivation" (1994:395).

The third section of this book traces the decline of ACT UP. In chapter 5, Gould notes how simultaneous depictions of activists as threatening and silly, coupled with the partial social acceptance of gays and lesbians, mitigated the effectiveness of anger over time. In chapter 6, she concentrates on the fracturing of solidarities: whereas a sense of crisis initially brought people together, over time fault lines of race, class, and gender became exacerbated and divergent, rather than unifying, and interests became pronounced. Chapter 7 focuses on despair, and on the ways in which this emotion both enabled the movement to flourish and led to its demise: "ACT UP's emotional habitus, born in a moment of despair and consequently oriented toward dealing with despair through overcoming it, offered no solutions; under the pressure of growing despair, it began to unravel" (p. 434). At the time of the movement's decline, she emphasizes, the game-changing effects of antiretroviral drugs were not yet known to participants. Likewise, she observes, as much hope had placed on the election of President Clinton, disappointment with results postelection facilitated neither a sense of victory nor a clarion call for opposition.

What, then, are the social-theoretical consequences of this book's argument? Gould discusses the emotional intensity of participating in ACT UP, for example, using Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence. For Durkheim, ritual and mundane space-time necessarily alternate periodically: are these shifts in the efficacy of predominant affective registers, and hence the advent and decline of ACT UP, explicable (or not) along the lines of a Durkheimian periodicity? Another line of inquiry, not pursued, would be Weber's argument about the routinization of charisma: how does the centrality of the affect of anger in ACT UP's trajectory resonate (or not) with Weberian observations about the difficulties of institutionalizing charismatic forms? Likewise, although Gould makes clear that her project is building on Bourdieusian insights, in the end it is unclear toward what, exactly, this analysis of affect is moving these theoretical conversations: if one more thing could be asked of this momentous and monumental work, it would be for the author to spell out more clearly in the conclusion where contemporary thought on these issues might go from here.

Indeed, this review is being written because *Moving Politics* has won a Ruth Benedict Prize for its outstanding contribution to current debates in queer anthropology, and this despite the fact that Gould's book does not put itself directly in conversation with contemporary (queer) anthropological literature. In this context, we might contemplate

not only what anthropologists might take from this study but also how specifically anthropological voices might effectively be heard as contributing to these discussions. And contribute we ought, for Gould's is—in both senses—a moving book.

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**Homophobias: Lust and Loathing across Time and Space.**  
*David A. B. Murray*, ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 227 pp.

## MARY GRAY

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When psychologist George Weinberg used the word *homophobia*—a fear of same-sex desire—to diagnose the collective loathing that met the rise of homosexual rights in the late 1960s, the implicit remedy seemed to be: get to know gay and lesbian people and everything will be ok (a take on immersion therapy, perhaps). But, today, when acceptance of gay and lesbian people feels like a no-brainer to some, particularly among those who consider themselves progressive (dare I say hip), the analytic purchase of *homophobia* falls short. Homophobia is, for example, unable to robustly address the geopolitics of queer-bashing, unpack the particularities of violence unleashed on bisexual or transgender people of color, or shepherd gay and lesbian rights activists and allies through a thicket of profoundly complicated concepts like “marriage” and “human rights.” In other words, the explanatory promise of *homophobia*, its appeal to a kind of blind, idiosyncratic disgust, cannot carry the weight of such a complicated, intersectional world. And, just as importantly, attributing rejection of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer rights to individual ignorance, fear, or hatred, means we miss the chance to see how norms of love and sexual desire cut to the core and sharply organize a range of institutions, practices, and contexts. *Homophobias: Lust and Loathing across Time and Space*, by David A. B. Murray, helps us imagine a more complicated paradigm that moves homophobia beyond the interpersonal and irrational to a place of collective and deliberative debate and interlocking systems of oppression.

Murray organizes the nine chapters of *Homophobias* into two sections that, in turn, unpack the limits of univer-

salizing the meaning of *homophobia* and examine the baggage of particular cases where *homophobia* means something far more than we typically give it credit. Section 1's five, relatively short chapters, ask readers to consider the limits of attributing antiqueer violence and rhetoric to the analytic frame of *homophobia* alone. The first chapter, Don Kulick's pithy assessment of the humanist roots that render anthropologists perhaps too hesitant to take on those we do not like or who do not like us, makes sense of the discipline's conspicuous absence from a discussion of the good, bad, and ugly of human affect. Ultimately, Kulick's chapter argues that it is precisely the depth of anthropology's rich critique of anything transcendently “transcultural” that positions the discipline to effectively step up to the task of breaking down the complexities of *homophobia* as intricate, layered cultural work. It is the perfect lens through which to read the section's remaining chapters. For example, Martin Manalansan's arguments in chapter 2 further drive home Kulick's claims about *homophobia's* symbolic flexibility. Manalansan uses four vignettes from his landmark fieldwork with New York City Filipino and other queer people of color to illustrate how white queer-identifying people's invocations of *homophobia* illustrate the term's capacity “as a mobile category located at the intersection of the traffic and travel of race, class, gender, and sexual identities and practices” (p. 36). Careful to note the very real pain people feel when they speak of homophobic marginalization, Manalansan just as cautiously points out how attending to that pain can be part of shaping who is seen, heard, and privileged as the subject licensed to call out the quality and truth of homophobic vitriol. Constance Sullivan-Blum's study of mainline Protestant churches in New York asks us to contextualize evangelical resistance to homophobia as not (just) mean-spirited scapegoating but a deeper ontological angst over the relationship between modern Christianity and secular scientific discourses. Her work cultivates an empathy for mainline Protestants that, I would argue, seems politically necessary for those who believe in the value of recognizing the polysemy of religion and, as such, sees it as a valuable tool in the arsenal of political battles for queer social justice.

If the first three chapters of section 1 suggest that we have vastly underestimated the complexities of homophobia and the power dynamics embedded in it, the final two chapters illustrate that, far from an expression of universal fear, *homophobia* is the outcome of contingent processes that have, to date, aligned it with conservatism, but, arguably, also leave it wide open to contestation and change. For example, Steven Angelides's analysis of the 1983 controversy that engulfed Alison Thorne, an Australian schoolteacher and lesbian activist, when she dared to challenge national media's conflation of pedophilia and homosexuality argues that political actors face particular moments when the specific dimensions of sexual

discrimination take shape in relation to other pressing national debates. Angelides's genealogy suggests where LGBT activists have the most work to do, namely challenging "panics" that position gay men's sexuality as inherently risky while at the same time defending the very possibility of young people's queer sexual agency. And Brian Riedel's account of the Greek acquisition of *ratsismos* in response to the inadequacies of the import *omofovia* remind readers that linguistic anthropology offers a rubric for recognizing the rich cultural logics always at work when signs and signifiers float about in a global context (as they always have). Taken together, section 1 builds a compelling case for the value of what Kulick calls, in chapter 1, "an anthropology of hate"—a close historical, political, and locational account of the social structures that organize and channel the flows of hate on and beyond same-sex desiring bodies (p. 31).

While section 2 asks us to consider what we take for granted about the motivations and meanings of *homophobia*, section 2's "Transnational Homophobias" offer cases to help readers reflect on how to hold complexities and double meanings in hand while also investigating the very real effects of homophobia in the lives of same-sex desiring people. This section's four chapters ask us to grapple with the complicated global register, indeed plurality, of the term *homophobia* and its related discursive moves through a series of cross-cultural examples. Suzanne LaFont, for instance, delves into the power of heteronormativity in Jamaican popular music, arguing that homophobia cannot be understood outside of the context of British colonialist violence and racial and class ordering that shaped much of Jamaican history. While Jamaican dance hall stars position homoerotics as Western imports that threaten homegrown morality, wealthy gay, lesbian, and bisexual Jamaican jet-setters demonstrate that class status still holds the power to trump—or sidestep—the moral superiority of heterosexuality. Like LaFont, the next three chapters, by Tom Boellstorff, David Murray, and Lawrence Cohen, take up how intersecting racial, gendered, classed, and sexual hierarchies organize through and in response to the legacies and persistence of colonial violence. All three authors consider the colonialist underpinnings that set the stage for how to read the relatively recent rise in homophobic violence in Indonesia, Barbados, and India, respectively. While Boellstorff poses the provocative question of whether or not Indonesian social order, organized by an orthodoxy of heterosexism, avoided investing in its evil twin, homophobia (Boellstorff believes it did) prior to the 1998 fall of the Soeharto regime, Murray argues that, at least in the case of Barbados, homophobic discourses circulate as ways to (literally) talk back to—and rage against—the brutal churn of modernity and its prerequisite unequal distribution of resources. In both cases, it becomes impossible to understand homophobia outside the logics of colonialism, postcolonialism, and the

ruptures and flows that these logics produce. The final full chapter, Lawrence Cohen's close read of media coverage and regional responses to the 1994 rape and murder of six men in the north Indian city of Lucknow, leaves the reader with the haunting suspicion that homophobia can (and will) be used to mark deviation from societal norm as an "incessant desire" that deserves, or perhaps is destined for, retribution (p. 171). A poignant epilogue, penned by Murray, chronicles the very real violence imposed on Edward, a gay Ugandan refugee now living in Canada, to underscore the need for "strategies of resistance" that draw on the force of global and local activism that resist the urge to reterritorialize where homophobia really resides (p. 11).

As moving and illustrative as the epilogue is, I want to highlight the significance of the collection's opening reflections to close this review. Murray's introduction does a remarkable job crisply contextualizing the conversation and underscoring the value of the anthology's contributions. The volume proffers nothing less than a paradigmatic shift in how we think and talk about homophobia. Murray also carefully qualifies the volume's arguments. He notes the limited range of case studies available, but he also quickly points out that this volume should only be read as a first step in doing anything to undo homophobia; he suggests that this volume cannot resolve whether homophobia is a national or global problem, although he astutely suggests that this is a false and unproductive dichotomy; and he acknowledges the conspicuous attention to violence directed at male bodies to the exclusion of female-identifying and transidentifying bodies. And it is the narrow framing of gendered homophobic violence that produced my only frustration with the collection.

While, as Murray points out, we may have few accounts of homophobic violence directed at female-identifying bodies for a range of reasons, not the least of which might be the misogyny that pushes such accounts to the margins, I felt that more could certainly be said to theorize the likelihood that homophobic violence might look very, very different for female-identifying bodies. Murray does note that such accounts are likely underrecorded and "institutionalized academic prejudice" renders queer women's lives "too narrow" a topic in some disciplines otherwise well positioned to flesh out the experiences of homophobia directed at queer women. At the same time, I would draw on Murray's volume to push us to consider how homophobias directed at female-identifying bodies might expand how we think about different kinds of violence, not just different kinds of homophobias. For example, public displays of affection with my female partner routinely embolden men to tell us how we have "made their day" or "fulfilled a fantasy." These comments, sometimes said casually, other times, with lewd intonation, produce a violent, symbolic annihilation: lesbian and bisexual women's desires for each

other must constantly combat the spectacular, consumptive control of the heterosexual male gaze. While readers may consider this example too trite to count or a simple case of mundane heterosexism, it is precisely my reading of Murray that suggests we should think otherwise. Homophobia, in this case, does not just undercut queer difference; it attempts to control and subjugate women's bodies and desires under the guise of heterosexuality but in the service of patriarchy and misogyny.

My one concern aside, Murray's ethnographically rich and theoretically engaging collection accomplishes a critical feat: it moves the hatred experienced by those read as "queer" beyond an exchange of interpersonal feelings to the messier terrain of intersecting systems of power and privilege. As each of the chapters in Murray's collection deftly argues, a range of cultural contexts and intricacies come together to shape what we universalize as the individual (sinking) feeling of homophobia. There are no easy salves to sooth homophobia, as this collection so effectively illustrates, without considering how homophobia is always necessarily rooted and entwined in myriad other "historically grounded relationships of inequality produced through the intersections of local and global social, political, and economic forces" at work in any given time or space (p. 3). Murray's contributors offer us an opportunity to reexamine how hating us is about so much more than, well, us. As such, *Homophobias* provides scholars and political activists alike with a much-needed intervention in the global analysis of and fight for queer possibilities. Plainly put, this timely and prescient anthology underscores the social and political importance of attending to the complications of hate—a necessary step if we are ever to intervene.

**Security and Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel.** Juliana Ochs. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. 204 pp.

**WENDY PEARLMAN**

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Israel's concerns about security are a staple of news headlines. What does this mean for how Israelis go about daily life? Juliana Ochs answers this question with nuance and insight in *Security and Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel*. Analytically sharp and elegantly written, the book shows how fear of danger saturates Israelis' everyday lives, from the words that they use to the decision about when to stay in for a burger or go out for a beer. In demonstrating the pervasiveness of security in subjectivity and embodied practice, Ochs shows how heightened alertness constitutes the experience of being Israeli. She also highlights its role in reproducing the very fears that security measures purport to alleviate.

Ochs bases her study on fieldwork carried out between July 2003 and August 2004, as well as during the summer of 2005. Her field sites are Jerusalem and Arad, a town 60 miles south of Jerusalem. Ochs finds that, despite the differences between these settings, residents in both places negotiate security and suspicion in similar ways. Although she tends to write in terms of Israel at large, it would have been valuable to read a longer explanation of the ways in which she believes that her interpretations are or are not representative of all of Israel. How might her conclusions have differed had she carried out her fieldwork at a different time or in a different place? This reader, who lived in Tel Aviv at the time Ochs was leaving Jerusalem, saw a slice of Israel that was distinct in many respects.

Three intriguing arguments run throughout the text. First, Israelis experience national discourses at the level of bodily practice. Ochs shows how concerns about security permeate her subjects' behavior, emotions, knowledge, identity, and even visceral sensations. The practice of security is so palpable that it is often hardly noticed. Thus, security guards become simply another part of the entranceways to malls, and parents wash their children's military uniforms as just another piece of laundry. Chapter 5 traces these themes through the question of space and travel. Four individuals' daily commutes reveal "security projections," or intimate spatial imaginaries that filter state discourses and offer self-protective strategies for feeling normal despite the danger of moving about town. Their stories demonstrate that even something as basic as getting to work is a mode of embodying security.

Second, Israelis often experience a craving for security as private and apolitical and rarely consider the political and economic strategies that reproduce their fears. Chapter 1 follows the historical development of security in Israel as an industry and set of civilian and government institutions. Now entrenched as a national preoccupation, people typically absorb a culture of security without awareness of those structures. Chapter 4 considers how Israelis internalize state notions of suspicious people and objects. As they adopt these discourses and play the role of vigilant citizens, they make officially propagated categories their own. Chapter 6 locates security conditions even in the highly personal realm of domesticity. Whether relishing in IKEA or investing in leisure "at home," many Israelis crave safety away from public spaces. Ochs argues that this seemingly innocuous retreat offers a way of coping with the threat of violence without actually reducing that threat. It is thus part of the complex of social and political processes that sustain security fears.

Third, Israelis embody security through "fantasies" about threat and protection. Many of these fantasies crystallize independent of actual encounter with Palestinians. Thus, chapter 7 follows citizen tours of the wall-fence that Israel has constructed in the West Bank. Tour participants



experience an imaginary of surveillance, control, and comfort, without necessarily learning its full implications for conflict, no less making contact with communities on the other side. Fantasies of security are also sometimes impervious to Israelis' own criticism or skepticism. Chapter 2 highlights a conversation with a security guard who admits that neither he nor anyone can do much to prevent attacks. The practice of posting guards at cafés, he says, is about nothing more than "money" and "a cover for the state" (p. 61). This testimony is telling but remains the exception to the narrative's norm. Most of Ochs's subjects seem to believe that their practices of security do help keep them safe. Here it would have been fascinating to explore more examples of Israelis themselves wrestling with the contradictions that Ochs identifies.

The strengths of *Security and Suspicion* are many. Ochs explains that most books on her topic are psychological studies, critiques of the state of Israel, or joint considerations of Israeli and Palestinian experiences. She offers something different and new and convincingly demonstrates that the role of security in the Israeli quotidian is a worthy subject in its own right. The book is rich in ethnographic detail and balances attention to subjectivity, habits, rhetoric, and behavior. It is critical of structures and practices yet simultaneously deeply empathetic with the subjects who struggle to find peace amidst violence. The book's conclusion—that the practice of security might make Israelis feel less secure rather than more—is an intervention of tremendous significance.

Ochs thus offers a truly important contribution to existing literature. Nonetheless, one wonders if she might be overstating her claims. The reader is left to ask if there is any aspect of everyday life in Israel that is not pervaded by security. Are threat and protection the only, or always the most important, rubrics through which Israelis have daily life? For example, do all volunteers for the Civil Guard force become apprehensive agents? Or might some join for mundane reasons and then slack off on the job? Could it be that Israelis like IKEA not because they seek a domestic reprieve from danger but, rather, because it is fun? The analysis would have benefited from elaboration of moments, spaces, situations, in which Israelis are not hyper-alert, corporeally afraid, or negotiating suspicion. We might learn something else about security by probing those everyday junctures when, relatively speaking, it is not the most prominent motif.

This critique aside, *Security and Suspicion* is an excellent book. It is a valuable addition to scholarship on Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with important implications for general understandings about the lived experience of violence and the meaning of security in a post-9/11 world.

**Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France.** *Miriam Ticktin*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 295 pp.

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*Casualties of Care* is an insightful examination of the regimes of care at the heart of the French politics of immigration. The book reveals how immigration has come to be managed by practices of compassion, focusing on the constitution of the primary subject of care: the morally legitimate suffering body. On the basis of two and a half years of fieldwork in Paris and its *banlieues* (urban peripheries) between 1999 and 2008, Miriam Ticktin argues that medical humanitarianism and the movement against violence against women bring together medical and scientific techniques in the desire to ease suffering. This politics of care enables a form of "armed love" in which the moral imperative to act is accompanied by practices of violence and containment, which end up reproducing inequalities. Ticktin provides an interesting analysis by articulating two issues that are not usually thought together; herein lies the main strength and originality of her work.

The book is divided into three parts: Part 1 analyzes the *sans-papiers* movement and the history of humanitarianism, providing the context for how the governance of immigrants increasingly takes place through practices of care. Part 2 discusses the on-the-ground politics of care, identifying the techniques that produce the suffering body. Part 3 explores the effects of these politics of care arguing that they are, ultimately, antipolitical.

Humanitarianism, explains the author, enacts a politics based on protecting the imagined universal suffering body through the illness clause. This clause is a provision of the French law on the conditions of entry and residence that grants legal permits to those already living in France who have life-threatening illnesses, if they are declared unable to receive proper treatment in their home countries. Ticktin's ethnographic data illustrate the increasing importance of this exceptional clause. The sick body is seen as a legitimate manifestation of a common humanity, worthy of recognition in the form of rights. The author examines how this common humanity is produced and protected in practice by the medical services. Institutional structures, political positions, and cultures of expertise play a role in defining human life and, thus, compassion also represents a critical form of discretionary power, helping to define the universal truth of suffering and humanity. Ticktin explains that nurses have a particular and important role, as they are "experts in the practice of compassion" (p. 113). Their job is

to translate the patients' traumatic narratives into biological illnesses that can then give rise to the legal right to remain in the country. Although there is much detailed analysis, the ethnography does not include extended tracking of the ethical conflicts and moral dilemmas of nurses and doctors committed to help undocumented migrants.

In this nonetheless tightly argued study, Ticktin shows that compassion is the exception not the rule as there are people who are not able to elicit such sentiments. She associates the possibility of compassion with the images of the colonial legacy that are present in the national imagination (e.g., the pitiful Muslim women, the antimodernist Arab men). Compassion depends on circulating narratives, images, and histories and often on maintaining the asymmetry between nurse and patient, between citizen and foreigner.

The appointment of Nicolas Sarkozy at the interior ministry in 2002 marks a shift toward increasingly hard-line policies against immigration, leaving open, however, the possibility of some—very few—humanitarian exceptions. The author explains that, in this context, the female victim of gender-based violence gradually replaces the sick body in terms of its ability to generate compassion and create the exception.

Ticktin explores the tension in the movement to stop violence against women between, on the one hand, a case-by-case approach that responds to a moral imperative to rescue women from violence and, on the other hand, an approach that is grounded in a feminist political struggle for justice. The author focuses on three different sites where this tension is at play: the Refugee Appeals Board; the bilateral agreements held with Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia that protect personal status laws based on shari'a in France; and a set of humanitarian exceptions to immigration law for victims of violence against women. Ticktin also shows how the Committee against Modern Slavery participates in a politics of care that ranks people on a hierarchy of suffering, and she criticizes its connivance with the politics of policing.

These regimes of care create what Ticktin calls a spectrum of subject positions. At one end, we have deliberate infection (sans-papiers having to manipulate their bodies to obtain identity papers) and, at the other end, we have the person who refuses the possibility of treatment (because of the stigma of HIV/AIDS in some communities). Many other subject positions exist between these two poles that challenge the liberal meanings of bodily integrity, agency, and human dignity. The mediating influence of these regimes in the politics of immigration means that certain types of subject become intelligible through their biology, but only when it is considered as pure, untouched.

While biology can be manipulated and provide hope for a better life, this politics of care refuses inclusion under conditions of equality. Ticktin suggests that this politics is in

fact a form of antipolitics as recognition is given to subjects of regimes of care as victims, as nonmoderns. This can only have diminishing returns, both in terms of future possibilities and sense of self for immigrants and for a society built on the principle of equality for all. Biological involution—that is, the violence produced by and embedded in regimes of care—haunts not only because of the threat of biological death that it presents for some but also because of the death of an egalitarian vision of society that it ensures for all. Once again, one might say, we can see the myth of egalitarian France falling apart. It is perhaps for this reason that, as well as being of particular interest to scholars working on immigration politics and humanitarianism, *Casualties of Care* will also appeal to scholars in French studies more widely.

**Islam, Politics, Anthropology.** *Filippo Osella and Benjamin Soares*, eds. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. viii + 256 pp.

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Since its unsteady beginnings in the early 1960s, the anthropology of Muslim politics has changed course several times, in response to ongoing changes in Muslim-majority societies as well as paradigm shifts in anthropology. With North Africa and the Middle East today in the throes of another great transition, we can expect to see another dramatic shift in the anthropology of Islam soon. This is what makes this collection of 13 chapters on Islam and politics so timely. All originally appeared in 2009 as a special issue of the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. All of the contributors to the volume are well-regarded researchers; most first went to the field between the mid-1990s and early 2000s. The collection as a whole bears compelling witness to the state of the anthropology of Muslim politics in the 2000s.

The book's editors, Benjamin Soares and Filippo Osella, introduce the collection with a quick but incisive overview of the main currents in the anthropology of Muslim politics from the 1960s to the early 2000s. The editors also summarize the themes that unite the chapters. These include the ideas that the study of Muslim politics should not be confined to formal political participation; that Muslim politics is not exceptional relative to the politics of non-Muslim societies; and, most valuably, that politics in Muslim societies should not be seen as "an epiphenomenon of Islam" (p. 15) but, rather, as animated by varied practical ambitions and projects of ethical self-fashioning.

The individual chapters in the volume selectively amplify these themes, in a manner both ethnographically rich and theoretically varied. In chapter 2, Samuli Schielke

examines the interplay of piety and sociality among young Egyptian males during Ramadan. He notes that the anthropology of Muslim societies has recently begun to highlight subjectivity and morality. But he laments, I think correctly, that much of this literature has looked “at the practice of morality and religion primarily from the perspective of coherence” and consistency with “grand ideology” (p. 24), rather than the hesitancy and multivalence that mark most human experience.

In chapter 3, Hatsuki Aishima and Armando Salvatore explore this same theme, but in a broader public landscape and over a longer historical period. Taking exception to those who argue that Muslim politics is characterized by a limited range of repertoires, they explore the vividness and variability of the intellectual field in post-Nasserist Cairo through the lives of key public personalities. In the next chapter, Magnus Marsden provides a fascinating account of Chitrali Muslims in rural Pakistan. The youths have the habit of taking leisure tours around Pakistan, in an effort not to cultivate a unitary ethical self but, instead, to develop a playfully cosmopolitan appreciation of cultural heterogeneity. In a discussion of the Muslim minority in coastal Kenya, Kai Kresse explores a related phenomena: how Kenyan Muslims draw on their experience of dual marginality (a Muslim minority in a peripheral part of the Muslim world), not to cultivate a rigidly unitary subjectivity but, rather, to develop an independent and self-critical state of mind.

Four later chapters highlight these themes of reflexivity and the multivalence of subjectivity with regard to women. Rosa de Jorio examines debates over gender in contemporary Mali, exploring how arguments over women's rights and responsibilities as Muslims and citizens articulate “often conflicting constructs of the ideal social order” (p. 91). Women participate, not in the calmly idealized public sphere imagined by Habermas but in spaces marked by “specific regimes of power” (p. 104). In chapter 7, Lara Deeb provides a powerful account of piety politics among Shi'i women in the southern suburbs of Beirut. She observes that some ethnographies of women's piety correctly distance piety projects from reductionist models of formal politics but go too far in detaching piety from the politics of daily life. In a demonstration relevant for women's participation in many parts of the world, she shows that many women merge piety and politics through their participation in Islamic social welfare associations. In her chapter on veiling in contemporary Kyrgyzstan, Julie McBrien reflects on Islamization and modernity by way of an engaging account of one woman's decision to wear an encompassing headscarf. In a rich analysis, Maimuna Huq examines the political ambitions of the Women Students' Islamic Association of Bangladesh, the female-student wing of the Jamaat-e Islami. Although ethical formation figures

among their concerns, these young women, Huq shows, dedicate themselves to self-consciously political programs, including the nonviolent but deepening Islamization of state and society.

Three among the book's later chapters stand back to provide broad perspectives on Muslim politics and economy. Irfan Ahmad provides an insightful genealogy of Maududi's arguments concerning the necessity of establishing an Islamic state. Shifting focus to corporate Indonesia, Daromir Rudnyckj explores how the language of spiritual reform is hitched to the cart of mainstream business management to instill an “Islamic” work ethic among employees. Although consistent with some market reforms, the ethic, Rudnyckj shows, is not reducible to neoliberal disciplines. In their chapter on Muslim entrepreneurs in India and the Persian Gulf, Filippo Osella and Caroline Osella explore a similar fusion of neoliberal enterprise and ethical self-reformation. Like Rudnyckj, however, they show that this Islamic ethic not only facilitates neoliberal projects but also sets moral limits on their pursuit. In a concluding chapter, Gregory Starrett examines controversies concerning the teaching about Islam in schools in the United States, showing that liberal-minded efforts to teach about Islam have unintentionally fueled an antipluralist backlash.

As this volume demonstrates, the anthropology of Islam has recently highlighted the interplay between political projects and the making of Muslim selves. As Soares and Osella emphasize in their introduction, the selves highlighted in earlier accounts sometimes presupposed an implausible degree of ethical coherence and libidinal single-mindedness. This important collection illustrates an alternative approach to politics and subjectivity, one relevant to the study of not just Muslim societies but also religion and politics around the world.

**Ocean of Letters: Language and Creolization in an Indian Ocean Diaspora.** *Pier Larson.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 378 pp.

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From her cell in Mauritius, Christian exile Mary Rafaravavy poured out her anguish in an 1847 letter to her queen, Ranaivalona of Madagascar. In their shared native language, Mary reiterated her pledge of allegiance to her highness but also unequivocally stated her allegiance to her faith, a faith the queen could not tolerate. Languishing from lung disease, she begged of the queen to bring her home for her final days. Beginning with Mary's story, the historian Pier Larson shows how Malagasy speakers across the western

Indian Ocean maintained their native language in the face of great social change, producing notions of shared identity through letter writing and literacy projects between the mid-17th century and 1860. Larson's book is also a challenge to what most scholars to date have argued about the makings of diaspora and the process of language creolization inherent in it.

During the mid-17th to 19th centuries in Madagascar and the western Indian Ocean, a multitude of Malagasy speakers were dispersed throughout islands of the Mascarenes and South Africa as exiled Christians or to serve as slaves. The Malagasy at home were faced with a king set on dominating all parts of the island, and whose imperialist strategies for doing so meant standardizing the language and initiating literacy projects, which European missionaries would carry out. The succeeding queen would exile even more Malagasy from their homeland for their beliefs. This and slavery would contribute to the largest diasporic population in the western Indian Ocean, their common language persisting 150 years after other languages in the sub-Saharan colonies were lost.

Whereas most ancestral languages were presumed lost and replaced by European creole, Malagasy speakers—of various heterogenous backgrounds—communicated across the Mascarenes and southern Africa in their mother tongue and its dialects, speaking it, writing letters, worshipping in it, and undertaking wide-scale literacy projects (bookkeeping records, dictionaries, education primers, devotionals, many of which our author combs to tell us this history). Meanwhile, on Madagascar, imperial projects designed by the Merina King to overtake other rulers on the island were administratively aided by literacy projects standardizing a written orthography of what was already mutually intelligible dialects across the island. Larson's remarkable dig through the archives takes us through these many acts of literacy—the vernacular imperialism on the island and the ethnically heterogenous pan-insular epistolary network outside. He walks us through how these exchanges nourished a notion of “Malagasy” identity and “nation” more so out of the country, than inside its political boundaries.

Larson's greatest intervention is not merely that he mined a scarce archive for evidence of language and identity projects in the vernacular of the enslaved and colonized. It is his alternative paradigm for how creolization is studied. Classic theories of language creolization base social change across emigrant societies on processes of linguistic hybridity or those of mixing; historians of the African diaspora in the Atlantic, for example, look to how slaves in the Americas creolized English as a means to communicate across their many autochthonous languages or mixed in aspects of their own vernaculars. This approach looks at how Africans contributed to the colonizing languages, but it fails to study the role of ethnic distinction speakers sought with their own

languages, a reading of the past that further marginalizes ancestral languages from colonial history.

Instead, Larson offers through the Malagasy case an alternative model, “versatility,” for organizing the processes of creolization. In this, he rightly invigorates an otherwise one-way process in which the dominant European language was the adopted language creolized by those estranged from their homeland. If the view of hybridity privileges the archive rife with materials on changes to European colony languages and perspectives; and if creolization-as-mixing sets European tongues and ancestral languages into a zero-sum game; versatility, Larson argues, begins with the notion that displaced people were able to navigate the diverse terrain of linguistic and cultural milieus and actually maintain and enrich the vernaculars of the homeland, even without being at home. In the end, there were no unilateral acts of power or single trajectories for ancestral languages and identities that determined how language was adopted, maintained, or changed. As he aptly orients us to the past, “vernacularization and creolization interacted productively” (p. 353).

With this documentation and analysis, Larson contributes a particularly instructive case in the study of diaspora here. Madagascar causes us to rethink how diaspora has been characterized by historians and social scientists studying the Atlantic slave trade. In the mid-17th century until around 1860, the island of Madagascar was considered the center of gravity for western Indian Ocean history, particularly diasporic and imperial history. Although historians do not consider this region a diaspora, it was a demographic and cultural pivot of the slave trade, the explorations of the French and the Dutch, and an active cultural center amongst the many islands of the Mascarenes and southern Africa. What is more, we now know there was an ocean of letters.

In this rich ethnographically driven historiography, Larson puts language to work to reveal what it can tell us about “identity thinking and practice” (p. 294). This text gives us case after case evincing the interaction between vernacularization and imperialism as active agents in creolization, rather than hybridity and mixing, which privilege qualities of language as communicative alone. Instead, Larson shows language is not a tool in a subsistence economy for learning a language just to bear a new situation, or get by in a new place. It is a creative activity of sociality, an object of ideology, and it carries a genealogy and produces many entailments in negotiating and producing signs of membership and belonging.

The text has many offerings to area scholars in the social and political sciences, particularly those who are ethnographically driven and those in diaspora studies. It will come across as great guidance to advanced scholars struggling with the uneven and thin postcolonial archive and those seeking new analytical tools for their findings.

**Sex Panic and the Punitive State.** Roger N. Lancaster. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 328 pp.

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Early in *Sex Panic and the Punitive State*, author Roger N. Lancaster recounts two experiences that transformed his encounters with and understanding of what he calls “sex panics.” First was his traumatic outing as a young teenager by harassing classmates, by his own account a profoundly “formative experience of his life.” Second was the troubling story of a gay friend, Ritchie, who was unfairly accused and eventually convicted of “aggravated sexual assault” on a student in his junior high school classroom. Following his conviction he was classified as a sex offender for ten years, and Ritchie’s promising career was destroyed.

These and many other strands of evidence, personal, formal, and ethnographic, buttress arguments persuasively documented in *Sex Panics* to reveal a history of the U.S. obsession with dramas of victimization, fear, and dread, often of nonwhite, nonheteronormative “others.” Tracing the development of race, social class, and sex intersections in the U.S. imaginary, Lancaster shows how American individualism, set against capitalism and (neo)liberalism, and peppered with generous amounts of fear, have rendered ours a nation of suspicious, wary, frightened citizens, especially about racialized and sexualized “others.” Interestingly, however, as Lancaster notes, is that sex-crime perpetrators tend to be white and sex crimes extremely rare, except among perpetrators known to their victims.

As I began reading the text, I was suspicious of Lancaster’s evidence. Like Lancaster, I too brought formative personal information to the reading of *Sex Panics*. Yes, a spate of sex-crime charges in preschools and care centers did result in unfair and inappropriate convictions that were later overturned; crime shows like *America’s Most Wanted* engender perhaps unwarranted attention to relatively rare crimes and foster unnecessary fear; and we are an overly litigious society. Yes, GLBT hate crimes are common; crime victims have been accorded new rights in an era of increasing attention to sex-related crimes; and ours has indeed become what Lancaster calls a “punitive state.” My own history of formative events included domestic violence, mothering three sons, and the disappearance and murder of a friend’s six-year-old nephew on his way to school. Weren’t these events evidence that all is not well in the United States, whether real or imagined?

A closer reading of Lancaster’s text reveals highly detailed, meticulous, and convincing arguments about the U.S. evolution toward an extreme focus on victims of violence—especially involving sexual predators, racial minorities, and gay men—and the creation of a “culture of

fear.” These tendencies result in a capitalist state that nurtures pragmatic solutions to the “crime problem”: more prisons, civil liberties curbs, increasingly repressive adjudication regimens, and the hijacking of the liberal state. In the early chapters Lancaster focuses on sex panics since the 1960s, parallel with the rise of the civil rights movement, gay and lesbian visibility, and the feminist movement. Along with these progressive movements were events that troubled heteronormative life in the United States, including the Catholic Church’s clergy sex abuse scandal, several day care center sex abuse cases, and other violent crimes against children. These destabilizing events brought about a variety of laws, including Megan’s Law, which detailed new conviction protocols for violent sex offenders that target children. According to Lancaster two by-products of these troubling times were (1) a culture of punishment (p. 223) and (2) a culture of fear. The dominant reaction to these disturbing crimes, regardless of their rarity, was to increase penalties and develop a more highly structured culture of vigilance that delegated to the penal system the task of addressing crime in America. As Lancaster notes, “The penal system grew as the welfare system shrank” (p. 223). Effects of the carceral state included challenges to civil liberties, presumed guilt, increased criminal penalties (even for victimless crimes), and marginalization and stigmatization of sexual predators, permanently if possible.

As Lancaster explains, the culture of fear surrounding sexual crimes was nurtured by long-standing racial and sexual anxieties, rooted in stereotypes of predatory African American males and queers. Contrary to data that shows that most sexual predators are white and heterosexual, perennial fantasies in the U.S. cultural imaginary about such potential dangers were conflated with fears for vulnerable innocents, particularly children. As Lancaster argues, responses, even among progressives and feminists, were to embrace the fear-mongering and accept the dominant discourses of penalty, confinement, and stigma.

Lancaster notes that along with the harsher punishments and longer sentences for sometimes minor offences—consensual sex among consenting minors, for example—appeared a new movement: what he describes as an obsession with victim rights. The focus on victims, he argues, dramatically increased society’s sympathy and desire for retribution against these dreaded pariahs: sexual predators, especially those targeting children. As Lancaster argues, the panic about sex criminals was a subtext for dominant themes in U.S. discourse and in the U.S. imaginary, focusing on race, social class, and sex. Our culture, he argues is most comfortable with tropes that racialize victims as white and criminals as black or homosexual, and that offer solutions rooted in pragmatism, such as strengthening laws and building more prisons. He blames both right-wing conservatives and liberal reformers, for concentrating on

redressing victims rather than solving the more challenging roots of crime. The result has been, according to Lancaster, an “increasingly paranoid, irrational, narcissistic, and authoritarian political culture” that uses fear to forward a totalitarian capitalist agenda. He concludes, “A recurrent culture of fear provides the crucial nexus of punitive governance at home and irrational imperial adventures abroad” (p. 242).

*Sex Panic* is most compelling in the broader critique of the punitive state and its repressive tendencies. Are there legitimate sources of anxiety and fear in the United States today, a nation with the highest rate of gun ownership in the world, economic inequality reminiscent of developing countries, and where one-third of women report to having been sexually assaulted? Indeed, there appears to be legitimate cause for fear, particularly among females, which Lancaster does not address. His wider analysis, however, is worth a closer look.

**I'm neither Here nor There: Mexicans' Quotidian Struggles with Migration and Poverty.** *Patricia Zavella.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011. iv + 328 pp., photographs, notes, tables, graphs, references, index.

#### REGINA MARCHI

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Patricia Zavella initially set out to do a study of poverty in Santa Cruz, California, but soon realized that poverty could not be discussed without considering the influence of Mexican migration on constructions of family, identity, and community among the region's working poor. The research for *I'm neither Here nor There* is based on 13 years of ethnographic observation in Santa Cruz County, where Zavella conducted more than 75 one-on-one interviews (primarily life histories) with low-income inhabitants of Santa Cruz and additional interviews with 39 cultural activists and professionals who work with migrant populations. In a creative extension of her ethnographic work, she included interviews with internationally famous transnational musicians working between Mexico and the United States, including Los Tigres del Norte, Lila Downs, and others whose personal lives and creative work provide insightful reflections on issues of marginality, poverty, and transnationalism. The book's strength is its frequent incorporation of interview commentary from individuals occupying diverse social locations within Santa Cruz's Mexican community, revealing how people's cultural logics incorporate, revise, or resist transnational political and economic forces. Helpful to aspiring ethnographers, the introduction includes a frank discussion of the politics of representation, the research process, methodologies utilized, and a self-reflexive consideration of the author's position as a bilingual, middle-

class, Mexican American professional researcher studying low-income Mexican migrants.

Chapter 1 provides an extremely useful historical overview of U.S.–Mexico immigration laws and policies from the early 1800s to the present. This includes discussions of the Bracero Program (1942–64), the North American Free Trade Agreement, high-profile border control programs launched by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (such as “Operation Hold the Line” in El Paso, Texas; “Operation Gatekeeper” in San Diego, California, and similar models along the rest of the U.S.–Mexico border), post-9/11 immigration policies, and past and present anti-Mexican sentiment in the U.S. public sphere.

Chapter 2 summarizes key social theories and debates regarding assimilation, immigration, border life, and transnationalism while advancing the development of border theory. Zavella proposes the concept of “peripheral vision” to help readers understand the realities of living “neither here nor there,” illuminating the multiple power relations involved as migrants attempt to keep one eye on life in Mexico and one eye on life in the United States, simultaneously participating in both worlds without being fully present in either. She is careful to distance herself from celebratory theories of transnationalism, depicting both the liberating potentialities and the heartbreaking, often brutal realities of transnational citizenship.

Chapter 3 offers vivid descriptions of daily life for the working poor who engage in “brown collar” service sector jobs in the wealthy, liberal “paradise” of Santa Cruz, California, illustrating how the daily lives of migrant workers are shaped by various sociopolitical, economic, and cultural forces of globalization. Chapters 4 and 5 examine migrant family formations and home life, contradicting and complicating common stereotypes of Mexican families (i.e., typical media representations of male-dominated, deeply religious, close-knit nuclear families). The book includes the often ignored voices of LGBT Mexican migrants and other nontraditional family and household formations such as male-only or female-only households, gay families, inverse parent–child relationships, gender role reversals, “suspended” families who live in “temporary” arrangements for years, polygamous family formations, and other underrepresented realities of the domestic lives of Mexican migrants.

With detail and sensitivity, Zavella illustrates how changing gender roles and generational expectations are affecting and transforming Mexican diaspora communities as migrants create inventive strategies for survival. She also reveals how the uncertainties, melancholia, and intense pressures of migrant life, combined with a lack of support networks, can lead to increased domestic violence, binge drinking, drug abuse, and other destructive behaviors that are important aspects of understanding the dynamics of poverty within the migrant community. Drawing

on close interactions with Mexicans on both sides of the border, Zavella depicts migrant journeys to and within the United States as she reveals gender and racial politics, worker exploitation, and the challenges that migrants face in attempting to make a living wage while forming and maintaining families.

Chapter 6 examines transnational cultural memory, looking at how cultural workers—artists and musicians—help form alternative public spheres in which they “invent and circulate counter discourses so as to formulate oppositional interpretations of [migrants’] identities, interests and needs” (p. 191). The role of public art in the service of social justice is discussed, exploring how cultural activists’ visions of a more just world, expressed through their art, “help build an imagined community among displaced and resident Mexicans who cope with the realities of capitalism and state repression every day” (p. 225). As Zavella illustrates, the desires of migrants to publicly express their identities and to establish a collective cultural memory are partly realized through Latin American and Chicano protest music, and Mexican and Indigenous folk songs.

This book demonstrates that Mexicans, like any other community, are not a monolithic entity. Differences in legal status, age, gender, sexual orientation, social class, or language use create tensions and even prejudices obscured by the term *community*. While this is not news to social scientists, the ethnographic data of this study vividly brings these realities to life, illustrating how Mexicans in Santa Cruz cope with these tensions and exercise agency to survive in an increasingly hostile climate of racial nativism, seeking alternatives to the mistreatment and exploitation they receive. Zavella aptly illustrates that the concept of “race” is never constant but emerges and changes at specific historical and political-economic moments so as to enforce white privilege. Similarly, she illustrates that migrant nationalisms are constructed from complex interactions between official state discourses in the United States and Mexico.

Theoretically sophisticated yet written in an accessible style, this book is especially apropos for graduate courses dealing with themes of globalization, immigration, transnationalism, and border life and is also recommended for general readers interested in these themes.

**Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights.** *Dorothy L. Hodgson*, ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. 301 pp.

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Human rights take their place in the middle of anthropology. The human condition, past and present, is always the focus of our studies, even when at times it has been manipulated to its detriment by states with the help of anthropologists.

A recent survey conducted by the Committee for Human Rights of the American Anthropological Association found that a vast majority of colleges and universities throughout the country teach human rights in some form. Most do not identify their courses with the title “human rights” but, rather, embed the content throughout their curricula. One of the issues for many anthropologists teaching interdisciplinary courses is the expectation in other disciplines that human rights are best defined by the legalities that establish them: treaties, conventions, and declarations. This skirts the questions of most interest to anthropologists, namely, how are human rights experienced by the people themselves and how do cultural discourse patterns and practices of men and women in a diversified world mesh with or transform such human rights codes?

Dorothy L. Hodgson’s new book provides us fresh material with which to address the issues of culture, gender, and human rights from an anthropological viewpoint. It will prove a valuable resource that has previously been missing from the array of textbooks that could be used in our courses and a book that will be of general interest for those who work in the field. It moves away from the simple dichotomy of human rights versus culture to look at the interaction of localized legalities and cultural practices surrounding gender.

This book seeks to “examine the very terms of the debate—gender, culture, and rights—and explore the centrality of gender to enduring tensions between ‘the culture of rights’ and ‘the rights of culture’” (p. 2). When rights are declared by universal transnational agencies, such as the UN, they are, by definition, acultural and ahistorical. They anticipate an undiversified human condition for whom the extended rights will apply. Hodgson’s edited volume calls this assumption into question by exploring cases from around the world through this multifocused lens.

The authors take gender rather than women’s rights as the framework to look at justice in various cultures and geographic locations. They look at a few male-gender issues along with the majority of chapters that address women’s rights. A shortfall of the book is the complete lack of material on nontraditional gender issues. This unexplained omission leaves the reader without the perspective of those for whom law and culture are determining life styles and life chances in the most critical ways.

*Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights* is divided into three parts: “Images and Interventions,” “Travels and Translations,” and “Mobilizations and Mediations.” In the first part, the traditional images of gender-based roles are challenged by several authors who remind us that there are competing forces identifying the roles of men and women. Salma Maoulidi explains in the case of Zanzibar that tradition places the woman at the center of the home, while law “forms the basis for social and public policy through which individual and citizens’ entitlements are defined” (p. 27).

Giving the historical context for the shift from traditional culture to a more national culture, Maoulidi looks at the effects of colonialism and nationalism on the expansion of women's rights.

In the second part of the volume, authors examine how the discourse of human rights is acted out under various conditions. Peggy Lewitt and Sally Merry report on a multinational study in which local NGOs attempted to situate human rights concepts within local practices. They provide good information about how the study was designed, carried out, and data analyzed. They conclude that "Culture is clearly open to new repertoires for political action and mobilization. . . . In practice human rights ideas provide political and moral resources to social movements, create allies, and establish an aura of universalism at the same time as they are tailored to fit into existing political and moral worlds" (p. 99).

In part 3, Hodgson's authors speak of how rights are mobilized and mediated. Lynn Stephen illuminates the Oaxacan movement orchestrated by women as part of a more general group of teachers to bargain for higher salaries. In 2006, a large part of Oaxaca was taken over by a coalition of more than 300 organizations who questioned the legitimacy of state government. Women marched through Oaxaca by the thousands but were prohibited from making a statement on public television and radio. They then took over the stations in their efforts to "speak" and "be heard" (p. 168). They won a temporary victory before 22 Oaxacan community radio stations were destroyed in 2008 by federal and local police. In the meantime, however, the "right to speak," "the right to be heard," and "the right to decide who governs" have become part of the vernacular and are widely discussed in the region.

Another chapter of this section describes the human rights abuses directed primarily at men in the United States who are detained and jailed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in New Jersey. Robyn Rodriguez writes of how men plead their right to remain in the United States. They base their claims on their status as fathers where they stress their importance to the emotional well-being of the family, as well as their financial support. These claims, however, are usually overlooked by the judicial system, overwhelmed by the concern for potential drug trafficking and terrorism.

Overall Hodgson's book is a useful contribution to our understanding of how human rights actually play out in a globalized world. The articles vary in scope and theme, but generally adhere to the book's topic, thus making a coherent collection. *Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights* adds to the supplementary texts that can be used in human rights' courses. Paired with texts that cover the human rights and law issues of the LGBTQ communities, it can be the basis of courses of anthropology and human rights or read for the insights it provides on this subject of growing concern.

**The Managed Hand: Race, Gender, and the Body in Beauty Service Work.** Miliann Kang. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 328 pp.

**CARRIE M. LANE**

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Miliann Kang's *The Managed Hand* is a well-written and intellectually rich ethnography that explores the perspectives and interactions of manicurists and clients in a cross-section of Korean-owned nail salons in New York City. Kang, a sociologist, expertly blends ethnographic detail with theoretical complexity, incorporating the work of scholars from Foucault to Bourdieu, Goffman to Said, Butler to Bordo. Pushing beyond one-dimensional interpretations of manicuring, Kang demonstrates how "the procurement of the manicure enmeshes women in complex relations that are situated in larger systems of gendered employment, racial hierarchy, class inequality, and global migration flows" (p. 241).

In a thorough and wide-ranging introduction, Kang situates her work within existing scholarship on beauty and the body, intersectionality, emotional labor, and structure and agency in service encounters. She describes her research methods, which included interviews with 77 Korean beauty salon owners, employees, and customers from the late 1990s through the 2000s; participant-observation at nail salons during the same period; and dozens of informal interviews about nails with people encountered "in the myriad locations in which New Yorkers find an excuse to strike up a conversation" (p. 23). Kang candidly situates herself within the text as an Asian American woman, the daughter of Korean immigrants, and a community and labor activist, and considers how these and other aspects of her identity shaped her analysis and influenced her interactions with research participants.

In chapter 1, Kang explains the growing popularity of nail services in the United States, and New York in particular, as in part the result of expanding demand for services providing physical and emotional attention to overworked women. She documents the gendered immigration patterns and cultural stereotypes—Asians as an industrious model minority, and Asian women as docile, subservient, and detail oriented—that funnel Korean immigrant women into salon ownership and employment. For most salon workers, the decision to enter and remain in this niche is dictated by the limited work options available to immigrant women who speak little English—especially the undocumented among them—and the discrimination they face in other types of work.

Kang's second chapter focuses on the experiences of Korean manicurists and salon owners (most of whom started as manicurists themselves) and their ambivalent



attitude to the work they do and the people for whom they do it. She demonstrates the “contradictory and uneven gains” (p. 58) of salon employment and ownership, especially with regard to women’s ability to care for their families. Although salon work allows some scheduling flexibility and the freedom to bring children to work, it also demands long hours away from home and family. Manicurists also describe their complicated feelings about this low-status work, which is made more taxing by difficult, disrespectful, and even openly racist clients.

Kang turns her ethnographic lens to salon customers in chapter 3, considering women’s motivations for purchasing nail services. She integrates three frameworks for interpreting manicuring practices—“beauty as an oppressive versus empowering force; beauty in specific historical and institutional contexts; and hierarchies of beauty defined by race, class, and other forms of difference” (p. 128)—in demonstrating how manicuring empowers and oppresses different women in different ways, with different results. Although most interviewees shared a desire for feminine beauty, what that ideal consisted of differed across lines of race and class, as did the meaning women attributed to manicured nails. For example, some associated “done” nails with professionalism and decorum, while others saw their nails as a canvas for creative self-expression.

Chapters 4 through 6 examine manicuring practices in three distinct salon settings—nail spas dedicated to pampering predominantly middle- and upper-class women; nail art salons where mostly African American customers purchase creative nail designs; and discount nail salons offering cheap, speedy service to a diverse clientele. Kang organizes her discussion of these different types of salons around the patterns of service provision she identifies in each: high-service body labor, expressive body labor, and routinized body labor, respectively. I did not find the delineation of these abstracted labor categories especially illuminating but was impressed by Kang’s nuanced attention to how different constellations of racial and class inequalities shape service encounters in each of these settings. She deftly employs stories and quotations from her fieldwork to complicate simplistic notions of the manicurist–client relationship. She describes customers who stereotype Korean manicurists as both laudable model minorities and “yellow perils” who spread disease, and salon workers who adore and resent their demanding regular clients. Kang also challenges popular narratives of black–Korean conflict. She quotes Korean manicurists who express racist views of black customers but still prefer them to white women, who are seen as picky and emotionally demanding; and she speaks with African American customers who resent Korean grocery store owners but describe Korean nail salon owners as valuable members of the community. She also considers the shameful way discourses of salon “safety” focus on the health concerns of customers while ignoring the more

serious toll prolonged toxic exposure takes on manicurists themselves.

In her conclusion, Kang asks what a manicure is actually worth, and offers concrete suggestions for improving this service sector. She describes organizations working to protect consumer rights and achieve fair wages and safe working conditions for salon employees. On a more personal level, Kang challenges readers to not simply avoid potentially fraught service interactions but, instead, to “choose the harder but more effective road of supporting their manicurists by paying them adequately for their services, treating them with respect, demanding that salons follow proper safety and health standards protecting both customers and workers, and joining with them in efforts to improve cosmetic procedures and regulations” (p. 250). Yet as Kang herself notes, “just because women are genuinely nice to each other and treat each other with dignity does not change the vast differences in their lives and resources” (p. 163). The challenge she leaves us with—and not just those of us who like our nails painted—is to pay attention to those differences and to take conscious and concrete actions to improve the conditions under which those around us live and labor.

**The Harkis: The Wound that Never Heals.** *Vincent Crapanzano.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. xii + 240 pp.

**JOHN R. BOWEN**

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The Algerian War (1954–62) left a deep scar across the French psyche. French Algeria had been a curious place. Part of the empire, from 1848 on it was also part of France, divided into three departments. Separated from the rest of France by the sea, it was in practice no further from, say, Marseille, than Marseille was from Paris. It administered Muslims by one set of laws and Europeans by another—the justly famous “separation of religions and state” inaugurated in 1905 did not apply there. It attracted settlers from throughout Europe who pushed out the Muslim natives and sent them to work in French factories. In some respects it resembled more closely the American South vis-à-vis the north than it did British India vis-à-vis England.

The military “events” of 1954 to 1962—insurrection, repression, tortures, and murders on both sides—and the eventual decision to let Algeria go were so difficult to digest in France that the war was only openly acknowledged by that name in 1999. De Gaulle narrowly escaped assassination attempts by right-wing officers who refused to acknowledge losing Algeria. The great 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers* (directed by Gillo Pontecorvo) was banned in France for years. Nor were the related killings that took place in

France openly discussed. In 1961, Paris police chief Maurice Papon (later convicted for his role in deporting Jews during World War II) ordered the beatings and murders of dozens, or hundreds, of unarmed Algerian demonstrators. Investigations into the killings were stymied, and even in 2005 a new film about the events (Alain Tasma's *Nuit noire*) could only be shown briefly in a small cinema. Access to archives on the period remains restricted.

Of all these testaments to the cruelty of the period, "the wound that never heals," in Vincent Crapanzano's memorable phrase, most visible today are the Algerians who sided with the French during the Algerian War. Once the French began to leave Algeria, vengeance was taken on those who had collaborated. Many who had fought on the French side were tortured and killed. Some managed to escape to France, often despite French efforts to keep them from doing so. France abandoned the greater number to their fate. Those who did make their way to France were put into camps, often the same camps that had been used to hold Spanish civil war refugees or Jews awaiting deportation. Some of these Algerians were put to work rebuilding forests. Once the allies of the French, they were now imprisoned and embarrassing reminders of a betrayal.

These *Harkis*, as those who fought with the French came to be called, are now telling their stories and demanding that things be put right. Crapanzano tells their stories well. Aside from a necessary, informative chapter on the war, most of the book is devoted to communicating the fragmented remembrances by some of these men and women of their times in Algeria, in the camps, and thereafter. The quality of their lives is as "being apart" even as they live among other French people, who themselves would rather the Harkis not be there, testifying through their very presence to France's inglorious abandonment of their sort.

The Harkis themselves feel ashamed at having been duped by France and feel torn over their own decisions or those of their fathers and mothers. Crapanzano confronts his own earlier sentiment (shared by many in France) that the Harkis did indeed pick the wrong side. He gives a frank account, through the voices of his interlocutors, of the brutalities committed on all sides and the pressures driving choices of allegiance. His reflections come at an important time, as French journalists are currently rather uncritically revisiting the anti-Harki accounts written during the period of the war, particularly of the battles fought in Paris. The author's greatest contributions perhaps are in allowing some of these women and men to speak of what happened after their arrival: the forced moves, the prisonlike conditions, the humiliations. At base, I think, is a demand for recognition as equal citizens in the broad, cultural sense, a recognition denied to them by insults and the state's stonewalling on promises.

Crapanzano concludes with a series of reflections on the Harki dilemma. They resist forgetting, even as many of

them, particularly those of the younger generation, have never had access to the memories. They demand equality as French women and men and, yet, exist as a group only because of their mistreatment and exclusion. They see apologies and forgiveness for the complicated acts they are: establishing the superior position of he who forgives, implying a closure that those who suffered are far from sure they desire.

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**Ethnography as Commentary: Writing from the Virtual Archive.** Johannes Fabian. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008. 139 pp.

## SHERRY B. ORTNER

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*Ethnography as Commentary* launches from the point that it is now possible to put ethnographic texts up on the web, thereby making them accessible to anyone who cares to look: the ethnographer at different points in time, other scholars, others who participated in the making of the text, and so on. The text then becomes both the resource for, and the constraint on, a kind of writing that Fabian calls "commentary," including transcription, translation, and a kind of expanded ethnographic elaboration. One virtue of this approach is to anchor the process of ethnographic knowledge making in the "communicative events" that Fabian takes to be central to fieldwork, that can be reaccessed electronically and, thus, "made present" for continued reexperiencing and rethinking.

One could argue that books serve the same purpose; they are texts to which everyone in principle has access, they can be returned to later for rethinking and reinterpretation, and so forth. Fabian does not address the comparison between books and the internet at any length; his main point seems to be that traditional publishers have not been willing to publish extended transcriptions and translations of foreign language texts, while the internet offers unlimited time and space for the presentation and accessible archiving of such material. (That being said, one has to do a bit of hunting to find the transcription and translation on which this book is based. The URL offered on page 3 of the book, <http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/lpca>, does not provide the volume number [#7] or the title [*"Magic and Modernity: A Conversation with a Herbalist and Practitioner of Magic"*] of the

text within the Archives of Popular Swahili to which the link takes the reader.)

The text in question is based on a long interview Fabian conducted with a “herbalist and practitioner of magic” named Kahenga in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) in 1974. Because there had been a number of break-ins and robberies in the neighborhood, Fabian had commissioned Kahenga to perform a ritual of protection for his house and family. The interview took place a few days afterward with Fabian, who had observed the ritual, questioning Kahenga about the meaning of various aspects of what he had done.

The interview was taped at the time, but transcribed, translated, and posted on the web only recently by Fabian. The book is filled with fine-grained observations on the complexities of language use (e.g., code-switching) and misuse (e.g., Fabian’s awkward choices of terms) in the course of the interview. Much of this will be of interest to linguistic anthropologists; indeed, the book is addressed in many places to readers with some expertise in, or at least familiarity with, linguistic anthropology. But the many observations on language use and misuse in the interview will also be of interest to any ethnographers who have heard themselves speaking a field language on tape, with mistakes, awkward locutions, and failures to pick up on what one’s interlocutor is saying.

After the chapter on the interview, there is a more theoretical chapter on the nature of texts. I want to set this aside for the moment and return to it later.

In the following three substantive chapters, Fabian uses the text of the interview with Kahenga to open up three areas of commentary, one each on Kahenga’s “work,” his “world,” and his “thought.” Fabian begins by reminding us of the second virtue, as it were, of working with the model of commentary-on-a-text: by allowing our writing to be guided by the text, we avoid imposing on the material “the kind of scheme that used to guide the writing of monographs in anthropology” (p. 56). Yet Fabian immediately acknowledges that this is never fully possible because “the ethnographic commentator is beholden to a world outside the texts he or she produced. . . . The ethnographic commentary must take notice of that world” (p. 56). The chapters on Kahenga’s work, his world, and his thought are thus hybrid creations, as Fabian struggles to stay close to the text on the one hand, and provide the reader with the kinds of information–knowledge–understanding that is, after all, the job of the ethnographer to provide.

What I found most interesting in the book was the account, threaded through all the chapters, of Fabian struggling to transcribe and translate the text, becoming aware again and again of how hard it is to get cross-linguistic and cross-cultural interpretation right. I am not sure the book can stand as a model of what (one kind of) ethnography should look like, as Fabian is proposing. But it does provide

a model of intellectually and ethically rigorous translation practices from which every anthropologist can and should learn.

I do have some questions. First, the book is underreferenced. Fabian is aware of this and defends himself several times on this question, but it is hard to see how one could write a whole book about doing ethnography through texts and never mention Clifford Geertz. I presume the answer would be that Fabian’s “commentary” is not the same as Geertz’s “interpretation,” but would that not have been a useful discussion to have?

Second, there is no real discussion of the constraints on “commentary.” Why do some points in the text call for commentary and others not? Why do some things get included in the commentary and others not? Although Fabian states that “the text has much to tell about its socio-cultural, political, and historical context” (p. 73), in fact there is little discussion of either the political or historical context. (There is some information toward the beginning of the book [e.g., p. 22], but it is not linked to the discussion of the text.) I presume the answer would be that commentary requires following the lead of the text, and the text opens up some topics and not others. But then Fabian does in a sense override the constraints of the text at times, so when is this called for and when not?

Finally, I note that the audio recording of the interview is not available on the website; if it is there I could not find it. It seems that that would be an intrinsic part of the package, allowing others to hear as well as read the text and, thus, possibly to offer alternative transcriptions and translations.

But I do not wish to end on a negative note. Johannes Fabian has been pressing us as anthropologists for decades to think hard about how we produce and represent ethnographic knowledge. As with his other important works in this vein, *Ethnography as Commentary* certainly made me think yet again about the mysteries of writing good—truthful, honest, accurate, revelatory—ethnography, and that is, as always, a significant contribution.

**Winged Faith: Rethinking Globalization and Religious Pluralism through the Sathya Sai Movement.** *Tulasi Srinivas*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010. 430 pp.

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*Winged Faith* has alighted on booklists mere months after the passing of Sathya Sai Baba, the smiling, saffron-robed guru with an estimated worldwide following of tens of millions, who cut an unmistakable figure with his iconic aureole of jet-black hair. The timing of the book’s appearance can only bolster the definitive status of its account of the Sathya Sai movement, which begins with Sai Baba’s storied

ascendance to sacred personhood in South India during the 1950s and 1960s and builds to a dizzying depiction of recent scandals that have besieged the movement's transcontinental governance structures.

This ambitious and wide-ranging book has the makings of a classic in anthropology and religious studies. Srinivas has managed to portray the international spiritual movement in terms that are both grounded and appropriately vertiginous. At the same time, *Winged Faith* stands out from other ethnographic accounts of globalization insofar as it reflexively incorporates a decade of social science thinking—and rethinking—on the subject.

Sathya Sai Baba's following amongst the Indian middle class (on the subcontinent as well as in diaspora) is considerable and has for most observers all but eclipsed his humble beginnings as a healer and a wonder-worker catering to the rural poor. Perhaps not surprisingly, the movement's significance has previously been framed in primarily Indo-logical terms: as an instance of ongoing interplay between folk and Brahmanic Hinduism, as a new case of sect formation, or as evidence of the increasing individualism of religious identity as a counterprocess to *Sanskritisation* (the term given by M. N. Srinivas to the linked pursuit by caste-defined communities of a higher collective status in ritual and social terms). These sorts of themes, staples of the venerable tradition of Indian sociology, have not been bypassed in *Winged Faith*, and many of the book's keenest insights into the cultural logics of the Sathya Sai movement make clear their debt to that approach. At the same time, *Winged Faith* shows clearly that logics arising within the Hindu tradition necessarily assume new dimensions when one takes into account the global nature of the Sathya Sai movement, two-thirds of whose members live outside India, making at best occasional pilgrimages to Puttaparthi, the city where the Sathya Sai movement's central ashram and headquarters are located.

At the inception of her research, Srinivas set out to position the Sathya Sai movement as a countercurrent to globalization, then modeled teleologically as a juggernaut of McDonaldization that was bent on remaking diverse corners of the world in the image of the West. Over the course of the following decade, as social scientific models of globalization became more decentered, process-oriented, and attuned to complexity and unpredictability, Srinivas's research protocols and her very conceptualization of the movement kept pace. While earlier phases of the research focused on Puttaparthi, Srinivas ended up logging thousands of flight miles to traverse a good portion of the global Sai network, capping off her travels by spending time with devotees at their homes and at Sai devotional centers across New England.

In recapitulating the conceptual development of globalization within the elaboration of its argument as well as in its narrative arc, *Winged Faith* offers an engaging model of intellectual reflexivity that adds significantly to the book's

pedagogical value. If there is a downside here, it lies in the tangled mass of theoretical concepts and citations that one encounters in the book's introduction and in a few of the chapters, where the argumentation can feel confusing rather than elucidatory. Fortunately, Srinivas's keen sense of ethnographic setting and spatiality prevents this from becoming more than a minor distraction. For this reader, the book's contents divided themselves rather neatly into two parts. The first half of the book establishes a foundational interplay between settled and "nomadic" aspects of charisma, offering amongst other things a highly granular view of life at the Sai Baba's Prasanthi Nilayam ashram in Puttaparthi. Chapters 1 through 3 work together to create a concrete sense of spatial scale, dealing as they do with storied figure of Sai Baba; the built environment of the city of Puttaparthi, where his ashram is located; and the paradoxical intimacies of a devotional life punctuated by mass public gatherings. One particularly effective analysis of the movement's proxemics concerns the experience, typical amongst devotees, of striving repeatedly in vain for a personal encounter with Sai Baba. Here, Srinivas movingly shows how devotees understand and manage their frustrated desires for Sai Baba's *darsan*, for the sacralizing locking of gazes with him, in ways that bring them to a deeper understanding of *leela* (fate as divine play).

From the very outset of her research on the movement, Srinivas found her attention drawn to problems of translation and incommensurability arising in interactions amongst Indian and international devotees, volunteers, and staff. "Cultural translation," framed as an ongoing problematic within face-to-face relations, as well as across the satellite Sai communities and virtual publics that are increasingly salient within the movement, thus looms large in the second half of the book. Chapter 4, set largely in Puttaparthi, explores disagreements over proper comportment as well as affective and visceral issues such as the value of devotional love or the legitimacy of bodily desires. Srinivas discerns a certain schooling in pluralism taking place around these kinds of fault lines, as devotees come to recognize one another's backgrounds and contexts as generative of a "matrix of possible meanings" around each contested issue. Chapter 5 shifts gear (and scale), examining how allegations of sexual abuse within Sai's inner circle were disseminated across a transnational network of disenchanting former devotees, prompting counterinterpretive strategies of damage control on the part of the movement's global governance structure. Chapter 6, which explores the circulation of material artifacts across far-flung life worlds, seen as nodal points in the Sathya Sai network, is rather less satisfying—in part because the agency of the objects involved is not given the same consideration as that of the people who interact with them. Still, the chapter succeeds in reinforcing the theme of interpretation as a crucial site of devotional agency. This is in fact the thread that runs

throughout the book, pulling together Srinivas's depiction of the Sathya Sai movement as an ecumene whose global quality is constituted in large measure by its endemic intercontextuality, as well as by the cultivated capacity and readiness of its members to recognize and engage with this condition.

*Winged Faith* deserves to be widely read and taught in religious studies, anthropology, and cultural studies courses, and will be an especially valuable addition to syllabi on the anthropology of religion, South Asian ethnography, and globalization. Sadly, the book is marred by a truly shocking number of copyediting mistakes that leap out on every other page. Until such time as a revised edition is brought out, readers will unfortunately be forced to put up with the considerable irritation of their presence in what is in nearly every other respect a remarkable and exhilarating book.

**Bodies, Politics, and African Healing: The Matter of Maladies in Tanzania.** Stacey A. Langwick. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011. xiii + 301 pp.

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In *Bodies, Politics, and African Healing: The Matter of Maladies in Tanzania*, Stacey Langwick draws on the insights raised by science technology studies and anthropological-historical analyses to reconsider what health and healing means in the town-district of Newala, situated on the edge of the Makonde Plateau, in southeastern Tanzania. Specifically, she examines “the history of traditional medicine as a modern category of knowledge and practice” (p. 33) from the perspective of traditional healers on the Plateau but also in relation to the knowledge and practice of Western biomedicine in Tanzania. She pushes readers to consider seriously how healers bring into material being the often unseen entities from other realms, an important part of their therapeutic practice.

Based on over ten years of ethnographic research in the Newala area as well as archival research in Tanzania, the United States, and Europe, Langwick argues that processes of objectification of traditional medicine and the struggles over “the matters and meanings of traditional therapies” (p. 15) reflect who, in a given political context, has the power to define what constitutes healing, what she refers to as the “ontological politics of therapeutic objects” (p. 173). These redefinitions of traditional medicine were initiated by the colonial state and later pursued by Tanzanian health officials and Chinese medical specialists during the Independence eras of socialist and postsocialist rule. However, rather than viewing traditional and biomedical practices through the anthropological lens of medical

pluralism that suggests distinct boundaries between different types of healing practices, she shows how healers themselves have participated in government efforts to institutionalize and scientifically define traditional medicine while also maintaining the autonomy to pursue the well-being of patients whose health concerns lie outside the purview of Western biomedical practice. Thus, Binti Dadi and her daughter, Mariamu, traditional healers with whom Langwick worked as an apprentice, incorporated biomedical “bits and pieces” into their work while also addressing *ugonjwa*, which Langwick translates as maladies. *Ugonjwa* literally means “being badly held [which] suggests an unfortunate interaction with another, a relationship gone bad, an undesirable positioning” (p. 11), a condition that may reflect both visible and unseen forces. The author focuses on the ways that particular things, such as pimplelike growths known as *makanje*, are simultaneously given bodily and social meaning by those experiencing and addressing health concerns, situating a range of healing practices within their political and historical contexts.

The Makonde-speaking area of Newala has long been known for its powerful medicines and resistance, earlier to colonial rule and more recently to “development” interventions. Indeed, to some extent, aspects of the medical regimes and practices have paralleled precolonial, colonial, socialist, and democratic postcolonial histories in Tanzania. Langwick knowledgeably examines these histories in part 1, in which she considers colonial interests in identifying botanical medicines and legislating against witchcraft practices as well as the independent Tanzanian government's efforts at incorporating traditional medicine within the state health care system, mainly through the scientific documentation and testing of medicinal plants. She then discusses, in part 2, the practices of the two healers with whom she has closely worked, focusing on maternal-child health, which is not only a major concern of mothers coming for healing care but also of government and nongovernmental organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Langwick then focuses on a specific WHO program aimed at training “traditional midwives” in biomedical practices, a program intended to reduce maternal mortality associated with childbirth, by examining the diverse backgrounds, expectations, and consequences of three women who went to traditional birth attendant (TBA) training sessions. In part 3, the author considers the intersections and “alternative materialities” associated with the infant and child health care. These include an analysis of protective medicines provided by healers and clinic workers, the former, which protect children's bodies from unseen dangers attributed to *mashetani* (devils), and the latter, which protect children's bodies against enteroviruses such as poliomyelitis. Interpretations of the distinctive, but often conflated, conditions identified as *degedege* and as malaria are also discussed. While the political context in which

these health practices exist favor biomedical institutional approaches, diverse health practices persist in southeastern Tanzania, suggesting that the future of medical practice there reflects postcolonial political choices that are yet to be made.

Langwick's own experience as an apprentice to the healer, Binti Dadi, is reminiscent of Brigitte Jordan's work with the midwife, Doña Juana, in Yucatan, Mexico, in the 1970s. While Langwick takes a very different analytical approach to Binti Dadi's practice and its dialectical relationship with Western biomedical knowledge compared with Jordan's focus on childbirth and the ways that Western biomedicine has become "the knowledge that counts," Jordan's concern with the dynamics of politics and power that underlie assertions of "authoritative knowledge" is not altogether dissimilar. I found it odd that Jordan was not cited, especially in the chapter on WHO's Traditional Birth Attendant training program, which Jordan also critically examined in the Mexican context. Langwick's analysis of the multiple registers of health care and their political bases in Tanzania also resonates with recent medical anthropological studies of competition between midwives' experiential knowledge and biomedical practitioners' extension of their authority based on the increasing use of statistical evidence as the primary basis of hospital birthing practices in the United States (see Wendland 2007). The concerns that Langwick raises regarding postcolonial politics and medicine in Tanzania have consequences for us all.

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**Life among the Anthros and Other Essays.** Clifford Geertz. Fred Inglis, ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. 272 pp.

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Fourteen of the 20 essays collected here were originally published in the *New York Review of Books*, spanning the 40-year period during which Clifford Geertz wrote for that periodical. Seven of the essays are centrally concerned with Islam. The final five essays (in a section Inglis titles "Last Lectures") survey the central topics of Geertz's work and career: Islamic civilization in Indonesia and Morocco, religion and

political modernization, the fate of what were once called "the new nations" at the turn of the 21st century. The essays vary in quality, and it is probable that different readers will respond to them in varying ways, depending on their interests. Some of the essays are thin, heavy on Geertz's style (clauses within clauses, hyphenated adjectives, and "disorienting lists," to borrow Inglis's term [p. 2]) but without much of an argument. The best of them fall short of Geertz's finest essays (well represented in *The Interpretation of Cultures* [1973]) but nonetheless have much to offer.

Take, for example, four NYRB essays reviewing recent (in 1971, 1975, and 2003) works on Islam. It is well worth reading what one important scholar of Islam, Geertz, had to say about another, Marshall Hodgson, whose three-volume *The Venture of Islam* (1977) struck Geertz as "a magnificent achievement: a clear, comprehensive, beautifully researched, and, above all, profoundly felt account of a great spiritual tradition" (p. 80). Yet Geertz's own approach to Islam is to treat it as "less ordered and less continuous" than Hodgson does, a set of phenomena linked together by a Wittgensteinian "family resemblance," to be discovered in "overlaps" and "crisscrosses" across vast expanses of space and time (p. 80). Such an approach stands Geertz in good stead when he takes on the outpouring of clash-of-civilizations works that began appearing with the end of the Cold War and then received new energy from the September 11 attacks. Lacking Hodgson's sympathy for the object of study, these works tend to portray Islamic civilization, Geertz points out, "more in the perspective of its reactions to what surrounds it, to what confronts it and what it confronts—the West, the East, globalization—than . . . to the promptings, whatever they might be, of its spiritual character" (p. 143). In contrast, Geertz's stance, as he himself says repeatedly, is that of the ethnographer, the anthropologist of the local, and despite his high praise for Hodgson, he is tolerantly suspicious of most of the sweeping accounts he reviews.

It comes as a bit of a surprise, then, that Geertz sketched, in "The Near East in the Far East" (2001), what he calls the "mid-eastern, Arabic character," which, he believes, accompanies Islam wherever it goes. In this essay, he describes "Arabic culture" (p. 182; the scare-quotes are his) more as an institutional complex (of mosque, market, and school) than an ethos or worldview, and he sees it as one strand (albeit an important one) among the many "other constituents of the Indonesian assemblage" (p. 178). But the essay trails off into a meditation on the continuity and future of Indonesia as a nation-state, a topic that preoccupies him in several of the later pieces.

There is one lovely ethnographic essay in this collection, titled "House Painting: *Toutes Directions*" (1989). It is a reading of the significance of a 1986 decree by the municipal council of Sefrou (a small city in Morocco) to the effect that "henceforth, the color of all buildings in the

city was to be beige” (p. 88). Geertz unpacks this incident by sketching the recent history of the city—its changing ethnic, class, and political alignments, to be sure, but above all, in the wake of such changes, its residents’ changing understanding of “what a proper ‘Islamic city’ ought to be” (pp. 88–89). Less complex (and much briefer) than his most famous ethnographic works, “House Painting” nonetheless has Geertz’s best virtues: the meticulous, highly stylized description of astutely chosen local details, out of which to wring much larger significances, concerning both local (Moroccan, Javanese, Balinese, Indonesian) and anthropological cultures.

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**Reckoning: The Ends of War in Guatemala.** *Diane Nelson*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. xxxi + 403 pp.

### ELLEN MOODIE

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I discovered Diane M. Nelson’s first monograph, *A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala* (1999) soon after I returned to Ann Arbor from a two-year stint in San Salvador. The book was a revelation. (You can write like that? Think like that? About Central America? About war and suffering? Are we allowed to have such fun and still be serious people with political commitments?) Sure, my anthropology cohort had spent countless afternoons in the mid-1990s arguing post-writing culture–postmodern–postcolonial theories across a rectangular table on the third floor of the glaring orange-brick LSA Building (where the Anthropology Department was located). But postfieldwork, I, at least, struggled to articulate Salvadoran postwar ethnographic experience with all those French, German, and Indian posts (which, Nelson points out, in characteristic wordplay, are both “fixed, stuck in the ground and what move across it, a doorway of passage point where someone is stationed” [p. 5]).

The first few months back in Michigan, I had agonized over the dissonance between the words in my still fresh field notes and the ideas embroidering my old class notebooks. Then I found Nelson. I loved the way she took common expressions and words (like “fixing”), pop-culture oddities (like the science-fiction television series *V*), and other cultural-seeming ephemera (most famously, the Rigoberta Menchú jokes), opened them up, and then productively

rubbed them against questions of racism and war, indigenous identity and in Guatemala and elsewhere.

Her deconstruction-dedication disarmed me. I felt a bit of kinship with her as well, of the same (privileged North American) 1980s generation that turned to solidarity with Central Americans while resisting Ronald Reagan. She helped me think through *gringa* self-fashioning as well as Maya-hackers. I heard murmurings of discontent (“Well, she’s a great performer,” an esteemed Guatemalanist once pronounced over dinner after a Latin American Studies Association panel). I admit I envied her skill (esp. when reviewers skewered my own experimental efforts). But mostly I appreciated the challenge of her serious, passionate work, work that insisted attention must still be paid to Central America.

A decade passed. 9/11. Afghanistan. Iraq. Enron. Subprime mortgages and credit default swaps. Barack Obama—the birthers, the Tea Party. In Central America, peace. And violence. More and more people fled, again, including Rigoberta Menchú Tum, again. High time for Nelson’s *Reckoning: The Ends of War in Guatemala* (2009). She immediately introduces the text as “inauthentic,” and announces questions about the possibility of *knowing* itself. The book continues many of the same themes as *Finger in the Wound*, especially that of “duping.” In *Finger*, she questions “any explanation of Quincentennial Guatemala that relies on a notion of ‘duped-ness’ for its power” (1999:367). In *Reckoning*, she grapples with the fear that maybe we are all duped anyway.

The inspiration for the book is the “‘ethnographic fact’ that many Guatemalans use duplicity as an act of interpretation when they talk about the war—saying they were duped or that they duped others” (Nelson 2009:xxi). I recognize that sensibility from my years in Central America. But what makes Nelson’s work particularly powerful for me is its status as a product of political engagement at this moment in U.S. history. To give one example: Literally, as I was typing this paragraph, an e-mail popped onto my screen with the reference line, “The Big Lie: We Must Have an Honest Accounting of the Iraq War” (Koehler 2011). As I revise this review, I am listening to a report of 16 bombings across Baghdad, less than a week after the last U.S. troops left. Of course, Obama hadn’t pronounced “Mission Accomplished.” *Reckoning* is a timely book.

*Reckoning* is also a long book. It consists of nine chapters and seven “intertexts” in which Nelson “read[s] films and novels to elaborate on the conceptual milieu” (p. xxx) as she plays with content and form. These short pieces examine works ranging from Orson Welles’s documentary *F for Fake* and Michael Moore’s *Bowling for Columbine*, to the horror B-movies *They Live* and *Candyman*, to the Argentine crime thriller *Nine Queens*, each making points that will be elaborated contrapuntally in the chapters that follow. She suggests we watch the films while reading. Her approach

is not just pop-culture but, rather, her own unique hybrid; her touchstones vary among Benjamin, Butler, and Bhabha, Foucault and Freud, Haraway and Harvey.

Versions of some chapters were published previously, including the masterful “Indian Giver or Nobel Savage? Rigoberta Menchú Tum’s Stoll/en Past,” originally published as “Anthropologist Discovers Two-Faced Indian,” in *American Ethnologist* (May 2001). There Nelson confronts questions raised by David Stoll’s challenge to some of the statements in Menchú Tum’s *testimonio*. (Her “gift” is our fantasy of moral worth in our identification with the noble revolutionary Indian; it is an “Indian” gift because it is not “true,” we have been duped. But of course it is much more complicated than that. It is All True. Read the book. Both.)

Indeed, Menchú Tum could be said to be a main character in this multisided production. Nelson does not, for the most part, perform “being-there” authoritative knowledge derived from interactions with pseudonymous men and women re-presented from field notes and interviews (although there’s no doubt she has been there in spurts long and short since 1985). Instead, several iconic figures haunt the text. Along with Menchú Tum, there’s Jennifer Harbury, the North American who went on a hunger strike demanding to know what happened to her indigenous guerrilla husband; Helen Mack, sister of assassinated Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack, who spent years campaigning for truth and justice; the Guatemalan cartoonist Filóchofo; and, perhaps, Dorothy and the Scarecrow, personas I might suggest represent different aspects of the anthropologist-author herself.

This book will not clarify the postwar transition in Guatemala for most readers. No book could really do that (without duping). *Reckoning* precisely does not want to do that. Not exactly. This is a book of ideas and concepts about war and indigeneity and politics and possibility emerging from immersion in both the Guatemalan milieu and elite Northern academic venues. It looks askew at any assumption of knowing—while admitting that we must still desire it. The book cannot help itself in that somehow its goal is to

make some things visible, to account for what happened—to be in the know, even as it (knows it) cannot.

Let me tell you why I finally found *Reckoning* valuable. I finally read it cover-to-cover in the fall of 2011. Nelson forced me to rethink assumptions (in many possible permutations of the word, which she lays out in a “cheat sheet” on assumptions in the front of the book—starting with the warning, “What happens when you assume? You make an ass out of you and me” [p. ix]). As I turned the book’s pages (sometimes in airports with Fox or CNN blaring above my head), the surreal Republican presidential candidate debates played out (enough said); the federal deficit that had suddenly become a dire threat to the nation was not resolved by the Congressional Super Committee (life went on); the Iraq war that began with a lie (we were duped) “ended” as troops came home (are we still duped?). Reading Nelson’s book came as a kind of response to all the dire absurdities passing on the screens.

She ends her *Ends* by bringing together discussions of the invention of double-entry bookkeeping, the rise of audit cultures, and the fantasy of zero (that Mayan invention)—whether Ground Zero, Patient Zero, or the closing of accounts in postwar transitions. What next? All Nelson tells us is this: We cannot close the books (without the dupe of zeroing). Still, we must close the book(s). We must move on. *Reckoning* is both essential and insufficient.

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