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Book review: practicing culture, edited by Craig Calhoun and Richard Sennett

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Book reviews

Adams, M. **Self and Social Change** Sage Publications 2007 189 pp. £60.00 (hardback)
£19.99 (paperback)

Throughout the postwar period in the West, social theorists have grappled with the problem of self/identity, both in terms of conflicts between individual needs and social demands and in light of significant and destabilizing social transformations. On the nature of the social changes wrought by modernity there is widespread agreement. While by no means affecting everyone equally, these changes include the pluralization of authorities, the deinstitutionalization of private life, the decline of overarching systems of meaning, the reconfiguration of time and space, global flows of people and products, and much more. We now find ourselves in a situation of fluidity and flux, without the old rituals and stable institutions, disembedded from tradition and external ordering criteria, and flooded by media imagery, new technologies, and a consumption ethic. Our lives are more mobile, more individualized, and managed with fewer and weaker communal ties. To this general agreement about social conditions, there is also broad consensus that these conditions create major challenges for identity formation and maintenance. Where social theorists disagree is on what these conditions and challenges mean.

In *Self and Social Change*, Matthew Adams provides a clearly written and concise summary of key theoretical accounts of the meaning of social change for psychic life and the experience of self. The sociological tradition has long emphasized the negative impact that social transformations can have on individuals and has coined a rich vocabulary to describe adverse effects: alienation, anomie, atomization, the iron cage, and the like. Adams calls this tradition the 'psychosocial fragmentation thesis,' and discusses a number of more recent contributions to it, from Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*, to Riesman et al's *The Lonely Crowd*, Putnam's *Bowling Alone* and Sennett's *The Corrosion of Character*. The central tenet of this thesis, he argues, is that the deterioration of social life leads, more or less straightforwardly, to a self that is isolated, alienated, and adrift.

Against this 'declensionist' account, Adams contrasts the more optimistic 'reflexivity thesis' championed by Anthony Giddens, and in various forms by all those whose analysis is premised on a reflexive and calculating actor. For Giddens, a range of cultural options are available to address each of the 'tribulations of the self' brought about by social instability. Rather than succumbing to fragmentation, for instance, an identity can be reflexively constructed that purposively incorporates many diverse elements. In the face of powerlessness in an anomic public realm and/or inadequate social mastery in personal relationships, identity can be strengthened through direct efforts at active control. The pluralization of

moral authority, Giddens argues, can be countered through the use of more specialized forms of expert advice and by the adoption of a workable 'principle of doubt' for evaluating the claims of rival authorities. And so on. In Giddens' vision, self-definition is a reflexive project fraught with danger but also with rich possibility. He sees current conditions offering a fairly unfettered opportunity to construct a meaningful identity, one built up according to a life-plan, realized in experience and life-style, and held together by an internally-referential life narrative.

The reflexivity thesis has been challenged on a number of key points and runs counter to other, more critical readings of contemporary experience. Especially important in Adams' summary of criticisms is the charge that the thesis, like rationalist theories of action generally, underestimates the role of established structures and cultural patterns on self-definition and overestimates the rational ego at the expense of 'habitual, unconscious, ambiguous, and emotional dimensions' of selfhood, and the self's embodiment. Further, Adams stresses that 'reflexivity' in this thesis is itself a cultural framework with prescriptive force. It unwittingly reproduces basic neo-liberal and taken-for-granted assumptions of contemporary Western society. In this sense, reflexivity and the valorization of the liberated agent may have, in Adams' words, 'a regulative role in the constitution of modern subjectivity at least as much as a liberating one'.

Not all theorists, Adams shows, have been impressed by the emancipatory potential of freedom of choice and continuous self-monitoring. In his writing on the government of selves, Foucault argued that social change has shifted regulation from external and authoritarian forms to more subtle and invisible ones that demand high levels of self-surveillance and the active interiorization of normative conduct by the governed. In his view, the notion of self-reflexivity as individualized empowerment is a fiction that masks the increasing administration of individual lives and psyches by all manner of experts and tutelary systems. Recent work in the Foucauldian tradition has extended this reading of 'compulsory individualism' in important ways. Adams highlights the work of Paul Du Gay, Nikolas Rose, and others, who have analysed work life and explored the normative discourses of 'enterprise' and 'entrepreneur' as models of selfhood.

Yet others, informed by psychoanalysis and object-relations theory, have taken a similarly jaundiced view of the perpetual self-scrutiny and championing of choice characteristic of contemporary society. Adams concentrates on Christopher Lasch in particular, who argued that social change and endemic social instability have created the conditions for widespread problems of narcissism. The concept of narcissism has caused confusion, and interest in it has waned over the past two decades. Adams is to be commended, however, for retrieving this body of work because narcissism in its clinical sense—a blurring of boundaries between the self and what is not self—adds an important dimension to thinking about the psychological impact of social change. Specifically, it provides a theoretically robust connection between the erosion of an objective, taken-for-granted world in modern consciousness and the emergence of a fragile, shifting, and fragmented experience of self and tenuous relations with others. Through this psychoanalytic lens, Lasch reads the abundance of 'choice' in commodity capitalism and endless self-scrutiny not as harbingers of autonomous selfhood but as alienating and pathological, contributing, in Adams' words, to a 'hypochondria of the soul' rather than a richer and wider identity.

Both the Foucauldian and Laschian approaches, Adams argues, have important and widely-discussed weaknesses. They suffer from overdeterminism and a failure to accommodate agency. Like the psychosocial fragmentation and reflexivity theses, they too offer an inadequate account of self in relation to social change. Despite their accomplishments, we still need, Adams maintains, theory that better captures the dynamic and relational embodiment of the self as well as its embeddedness in complex, differentiating social structures. We

need, in short, a better understanding of reflexivity, and in the end he proposes a multidimensional reconfiguration.

Self and Social Change is a terrific book. If looking for an accessible introductory text, look no further.

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Bruce, Steve Paisley: Religion and Politics in Northern Ireland Oxford University Press
2007 293 pp. £26 (hardback)

Moloney, Ed Paisley: From Demagogue to Democrat? Poolbeg Press 2008 562 pp. €22.99
(paperback)

The Rev. Ian Paisley's conversion to power-sharing with Sinn Fein has been one of the most surprising developments in Northern Ireland's long and often rocky road to peace. When the firebrand preacher/politician agreed to sit in the executive of the Northern Ireland Assembly with men he had routinely claimed were deeply involved with the Irish Republican Army (IRA), he surrendered his reputation as 'Dr No' and helped to inaugurate what many hope is a new era in Northern Irish politics. Two recent books attempt to explain how this has happened. Both are written by long-time observers and commentators on Paisley, his Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), and his Free Presbyterian Church. Both are updated versions of earlier volumes written in the dark days of the mid-1980s, when many blamed Paisley for stirring up sectarianism and violence.

Steve Bruce's original 1986 book, *God Save Ulster: The Religion and Politics of Paisleyism*, has become the classic academic text for explaining Paisley, the man and his mission. The 2007 book is an update of the older volume and covers much familiar ground. It is thoroughly grounded in the sociology of religion, setting Paisleyism within a wider British context of secularization. Bruce, well-known as a proponent of secularization, continues to make what on the surface seems like a surprising claim: 'The Northern Ireland conflict is a religious conflict' (p. 246). This has been one of the most misunderstood and challenged arguments made in the earlier volume. But Bruce continues to argue that in the absence of obvious racial identifications, even non-practising Protestants see evangelicalism as the core of their ethnic identity. He continues to highlight the religiosity of individual DUP members and argues that religion serves Paisley well because it gives him fortitude and hope, clarity of purpose and a cohesive party (pp. 246–51). But even Bruce does not see religion as a contributor to the DUP's electoral success: 'The rapid transformation that saw the DUP trounce the Ulster Unionist Party owed nothing to religion and everything to a rational response to British government policy' (p. 265).

In his preface, Bruce says that he was motivated to produce a new volume in order to take into account the events of the last two decades, to incorporate new biographical research, and to contextualize Paisleyite religion in a world now haunted by Islamic fundamentalism. Of his new arguments, the two most controversial are that Paisley has been a principled democrat all along, and that compared to Islamic fundamentalism, Paisley's evangelicalism wasn't really that bad after all.

Much of Bruce's original book also dealt with establishing Paisley's democratic credentials. Bruce continues to approach this with a systematic reckoning of the evidence for and against Paisley's alleged involvement in violence or in stirring up violence. Bruce's position is that Paisley has used legitimate methods of democratic protest such as civil

disobedience (pp. 210–15). He even mocks the title of another book about Paisley, *Persecuting Zeal* (Cooke 1996), by saying it would more aptly be called *Nagging Zeal*. But most of the evidence for Paisley's innocence is of the 'not as bad as' variety, comparing his words and actions to the actual violence of the IRA or Islamic jihadists. For instance, Bruce argues that: 'On the one side, we have Paisley's sometimes extravagantly militant rhetoric. On the other, we have large IRA car bombs that kill and maim. Which is likely to have been the better recruiting sergeant for the loyalist terrorists? Paisley is certainly not the peacemaker some Christians would wish and much of his language can sound warmongering, but to give his commentary on the Troubles as much weight as real bombs and bullets is a strange displacement' (p. 233). Bruce may have a point, but it is a point that does not seem to take into account other contextual factors. For example, Ulster's Protestants – whose representatives controlled the Northern Ireland government from 1921 to 1972 – could more reasonably have expected civil disobedience to work than would Northern Irish Catholics of the same era or today's jihadists.

Bruce also argues that Paisley's commitment to democratic principles is grounded within a long Protestant tradition which has valued the separation of church and state. This argument has merit, and is discussed in more depth in updated sections in chapters four (pp. 130–4) and six (pp. 206–8). It at least allows us to see how evangelicals in the DUP could draw on their own religious resources to justify participation in the current political order.

Moloney paints a vastly different picture of Paisley. Another updated volume (the first was co-authored with Andy Pollak in 1986), this one includes substantial new material in the form of seven chapters on the peace process. Moloney, a journalist, sets Paisley's career within the wider sweep of Irish history. Published a year later than Bruce's book, it includes greater detail about DUP negotiations at Leeds Castle, at St Andrews, and of the opposition Paisley has faced in his own church and at the unionist grassroots. It also has an interesting chapter on Paisley's long-time deputy and now DUP leader, Peter Robinson.

Under Moloney's scrutiny, Paisley emerges as a calculating yet surprisingly vulnerable character. Moloney has never been mistaken for a Paisley apologist. Indeed, in a footnote in his book Bruce claims that Moloney and Pollak have pursued 'a relentlessly cynical view of Paisley and his followers (p. 199)'. Moloney, drawing on his array of journalist's sources, might retort that cynicism about Paisley is justified. He reports that when he asked people why Paisley decided to enter the executive with Sinn Fein: 'what is striking is the number of his past and present disciples who have come to believe there always was a concealed ambition in Ian Paisley, a part of his ego that yearned for power and was just waiting for the right time and conditions . . . What absolutely none of them say is that he did this because he had finally recognised the error of his past and wished to make amends before the end; that this was Ian Paisley's redemption' (pp. 513–14).

One of Moloney's most significant arguments is that Paisley and the 'Provos' (a slang term for the provisional IRA) have had a symbiotic relationship throughout the Troubles and the peace process (see esp. pp. 513–6). Moloney calls Paisley the 'midwife' of the birth of the Provos and claims that Paisley's 'blood-curdling' rhetoric and the Provos' bloodletting fed off each other in a vicious cycle of destruction. Paisley became a self-fulfilling prophet in that the IRA would answer his doomsday predictions with more violence. Further, Moloney sees the IRA as in large part (though not solely) responsible for the DUP's triumph over the UUP. The IRA's failure to decommission in a timely manner weakened the UUP and paved the way for Paisley to win the trust of the unionist electorate. And when the IRA saw that it could not win the war, it decided to win the peace by decommissioning for Paisley. This, and Sinn Fein's newfound willingness to recognize the police, made it seem as if Paisley had made the IRA go away. Moloney concludes: 'In the end, Ian Paisley went into government with Sinn Fein because he could and because the Provos made it possible' (p. 516).

Moloney's attention to Paisley's age, illness, and declining abilities also provides an interesting perspective. Relying on DUP sources, his discussion of the Leeds Castle talks in 2004 (pp. 412–22) describe Paisley as 'very ill . . . a walking corpse' (p. 414). DUP negotiators were anxious that his declining health would affect his decision-making. Leading up to and during the St Andrews negotiations in 2006, Moloney describes Paisley as in thrall to Prime Minister Tony Blair, who arranged one-on-one meetings with Paisley, ostensibly to talk about theology and seek spiritual guidance (pp. 444–6). Moloney also argues that Paisley's wife Eileen, newly appointed to the House of Lords, pushed him to make a deal.

Finally, Moloney documents the discontent that remains within unionism. He recounts heckling and opposition during the DUP's grassroots consultation process about St Andrews, analyses the process by which Paisley was pushed out as moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church, discusses the departure from the DUP of MEP Jim Allister, and records some unionist reactions to the Paisley/Martin McGuinness 'Chuckle Brothers' act: 'Okay, we know there had to be a deal but don't look as if you're enjoying it so much!' (p. 485).

Taken together, the books offer divergent, competing and yet at times complementary perspectives. Both are written in a manner that is accessible for undergraduates or popular readers; even Bruce's sociological writing is done with a light touch. Bruce portrays Paisley as a principled democrat; Moloney portrays him as a self-fulfilling prophet of war, and belatedly of peace. The complexity of Paisley is such that both Bruce and Moloney may be right.

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Calhoun, C. and Sennett, R. (eds) **Practicing Culture** Routledge 2007 238 pp. £21.99 (paperback) £75.00 (hardback)

Practicing Culture is the first book in the series *Taking Culture Seriously*, and focuses on how culture emerges from processes of doing, making and performing. Two central issues are explored in diverse ways in the essays in this volume: Why is practice seminal to the formation of culture? and How might the scholarship of culture benefit from attention to empirical explorations of practice and theories of social relations? These core questions are addressed by Calhoun and Sennett's introductory essay, and the ten essays that follow expand on the link between processes of practice and forms of culture. Significantly, the book has emerged out of an interdisciplinary collaboration between graduate and postgraduate researchers of the NYLON (New York – London) research group, initiated within the sociology departments of New York University and the London School of Economics. The research group has expanded to include scholars at various Anglo-American research institutions, and provides an ongoing forum to develop intellectual perspectives on culture through empirical research.

Calhoun and Sennett's introduction outlines the disjuncture between the analytic approaches of cultural studies and the sociology of culture: between an overtly theoretical analysis of social relations and a predominantly empirical exploration of culture and cultural objects. They argue that both of these approaches have tended to produce readings of culture that separate it from politics, economy and society. By emphasizing the interdisciplinary linkages between sociology and cultural studies, Calhoun and Sennett articulate culture as a process that is emergent and alive, and focus on the role of practice in its multifarious dimensions – both structured and lived, through social relations that are at once organized

and ordinary. They pay homage to the lineage of 'Bourdieu, Aristotle, Kant and Marx, Goffman, Certeau and Sennett' (p. 8). These connections are developed in the varied spatial and intellectual terrains of the subsequent essays.

While the contexts, subjects and objects of the ten essays are wide-ranging, it is their particular pursuit of practice that provides the cohesion for the book. The essays situate practice in the particularities of time and place: attention is paid to the minutiae of individual lives encompassed in objects, bodily gestures and routines. These coordinates of practice are scrutinized against the wider context of history, politics and economy, and social theory is applied as an analytic frame, where Bourdieu's 'habitus' and Goffman's 'performativity' feature prominently. A strength of this book is that it spans different worlds, scales and practices, traversing nations, regions and small objects, and cutting across practices such as wrestling, glass blowing, surveying and accounting. Perhaps one dimension missing from this range is the question of how people engage in *difference* through practice. Although Phillips provides an outstanding essay on gender, explored through the corporeal and sexual performances attached to the use of electric hair clippers, issues of racial, ethnic and transnational cultures are largely absent.

The essays are not explicitly grouped, but overlapping 'themes' provide important connections across the book. Craig, Kowalski and Gill each explore practice as a process of legitimization. Craig delves into the 'professional' status of the poet, by looking at forms of recognition, such as certification and financial compensation, and shows how practice shifts from early establishment to consolidation by following career trajectories. Kowalski focuses on the production of state legitimacy through the national inventory of landmarks, historical buildings and artefacts in the 'General Survey of Historic Landmarks' in France, explaining the inventory of heritage as simultaneously a process of discovery and a process of record. Gill takes us into the world of accountancy and financial decision-making in the City of London, and reveals the tensions between simple 'balance-sheet' measures of profit, versus interpretation where judgment and ethical considerations have a more complex bearing on decisions.

Wrenn and Benzecry observe the practices of audiences repeatedly engaged in formal performances. Wrenn unpacks the reciprocal art of illusion in professional wrestling in the United States, as both a strategy of delivery and a strategy of reception. Benzecry explores how an audience community at the Buenos Aires Opera House receives opera. The experiences of dedication of regular 'opera people' are paralleled with their ideas of beauty and relationships of privilege. These essays echo the notion that collaborative practices are integral to creative communities, as defined in Becker's *Art Worlds* (1984). This emphasis is crucial to Krause's analysis of the authorship of Brecht's plays, where Krause exposes the idea of sole authorship as a distortion of the realities of practice. Her essay articulates not only the inadequate recognition of Brecht's lovers and their actual contribution to editing, translating and writing parts of his plays, but also the contrast between the shared process of writing and the western reification of the author. O'Connor explores creative practice through an ethnography of the relationship between imagination and proficiency. She draws on her own experience of learning about glass blowing and underscores the importance of repetition as a mode of progression, and defines the emergence of the responsive practitioner.

Finally, Sezneva and Aronczyk explore from different perspectives, the practice of how emblems or cultural symbols are constructed and valued. Sezneva's research is rooted in an isolated region in Russia, where diggers and collectors enter into processes of unearthing, selling and collecting jetsam from a by-gone era, their actions constituting and reinforcing a mnemonic culture. Aronczyk's analysis transcends the specificities of place, by focusing on nation branding and the practices of representing national identity, ultimately showing how the emblematic idea of national cohesion has shifted from social and political concerns, to standardization for economic ends.

Overall, *Practicing Culture* brings a performative lens to bear on the sociology of culture, and an empirical approach to cultural studies. By focusing on practice as the everyday, on repeated dimensions of individual and collective human endeavour, it connects the analysis of cultural forms to social processes, aligning the intellectual boundaries between culture and society. The rich and varied collection of individual essays in this book are developed as much through theoretical traditions as through the situated particularities of context, and offer an important contribution to our understanding of how to explore and explain practice and its relationship to culture.

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Collins, H. and Evans, R. Rethinking Expertise University of Chicago Press 2007 159 pp. \$37.50 (hardback) \$22.50 (paperback)

Who should policy makers and citizens believe when it comes to making science and technology-based public policy? Many would say this is an easy question with an obvious answer: consult the experts. But who are the experts and how much should we rely on them? This provocative and well-written book tackles these issues by developing an analysis of different types of expertise ranging from the ubiquitous (e.g., knowledge of one's native language) to the very specialized (e.g., knowledge gained through years of experience in practising a scientific discipline). In fact, Collins and Evans identify ten basic types of expertise but focus especially on two. One is the 'contributory expertise' that most of us associate with the knowledge available only to practicing scientists like knowing how to design, execute and interpret the results of an experiment in particle physics or microbiology. The other is 'interactional expertise' by which they refer to knowledge gained not by actually doing science, but by interacting with scientists and being immersed in their language to the point where we can converse with them on their own terms. Notably, interactional expertise provides a bridge between the expertise of the practising scientists and the rest of us, which is the main reason why the authors believe that it is so important and should be emphasized more. But their broader message is that in order to decide who to believe, we need studies of expertise and experience like this book. Why? Because without these studies as guides we cannot decide who really knows what they are talking about. In spelling this out, the authors provide a variety of interesting and clear examples of the various types of expertise that they identify. They also present their own experimental evidence to substantiate the claim that interactive expertise is a distinct if neglected type.

The basic issues at stake in all of this are important because, as the authors argue, a balance must be struck between problems of legitimacy and extension. The problem of legitimacy is about finding ways to include sufficient public input into policymaking that will ease the public's rising scepticism and distrust of science and experts. In contrast, the problem of extension is about figuring out where to draw the line such that appropriate expertise rather than uninformed public opinion holds sway. The authors believe that we now tend to favour the former over the latter so much so that a re-balancing is required. However, this cannot be done effectively without a better understanding of what kinds of expertise are valuable and what kinds are not, which after all is what the book is about.

All of this is very good if we want a more scientifically informed rather than simply value-laden policymaking process. But beyond that an important question remains unanswered. Once we decide who is worthy of receiving our attention by virtue of their appropriate types of expertise, how do we ensure that they are included in the policymaking

debate? This is a question that requires an institutional answer. In the USA (and I suspect elsewhere), there are plenty of examples of expert opinion being utterly ignored by policy makers who have a particular agenda and are determined to achieve it regardless of what the 'experts' say – even when there is an overwhelming consensus on the subject among scientists with contributory expertise. For instance, in the early 1970s scientists studying commercial nuclear reactor safety systems in the national laboratories raised significant concerns about the integrity of these systems only to be ignored by the policy makers who were obsessed with building more nuclear power plants – that is, until the scientists' concerns were leaked to the national press. In contrast, nuclear experts like these and others were granted official standing in policymaking procedures in Sweden that eventually led to an official moratorium on further reactor construction. The point is that different institutional conditions may provide greater or lesser opportunity for different types of expertise – and public opinion – to engage and influence policymaking. Interactive and contributory expertise may be the most appropriate forms to heed in policymaking, but the degree to which this actually happens or that other less well-informed types of expertise dominate depends on the configuration of political institutions involved.

Put differently, while the authors differentiate between the technical and political phases of policymaking debate, and while they are more concerned with the role of expertise in the former than the latter, I am not as sure as they are that these two phases are so distinct. Conceptually it might make sense to separate them, but the world is often a messier place than conceptual distinctions like this convey. In this case, we need to take this sort of messiness seriously.

None of this, however, detracts from the book's insights, importance and general interest. Typology creation like this is a very fruitful first step on the road to a better understanding of what expertise is, how it affects policymaking, and who we should rely on for their expertise. A second step should be to put these ideas into a broader and perhaps comparative institutional context. But in the meantime we can be grateful to have a wonderful little book like this on expertise that can be appreciated even by those of us who are not experts on the subject.

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Peterson, Alan **The Body in Question: A Socio-Cultural Approach** London: Routledge 2007 169 pp. £65.00 (hardback) £19.99 (paperback)

Cregan, Kate **The Sociology of the Body: Mapping the Abstraction of the Body** London: Sage 2006 212 pp. £74.00 (hardback) £21.99 (paperback)

Waskul, Dennis and Vannini, Phillip (eds) **Body/Embodiment: Symbolic Interactionism and the Sociology of the Body** Aldershot: Ashgate 2006 297 pp. £55.00 (hardback)

Alan Peterson's *The Body in Question*, Kate Cregan's *The Sociology of the Body* and *Body/Embodiment*, edited by Dennis Waskul and Phillip Vannini, all address distinctive aspects of human physicality. Whilst Peterson's text is concerned primarily with exploring changing conceptualizations of bodily conditions, Cregan's book focuses instead upon efforts to theorize embodiment itself. In turn, the Waskul and Vannini collection provides a range of

symbolic interactionist analyses of the body, organized according to the different emphases within that perspective. Despite these differences, however, many of the same themes are present in these texts, including the tensions within body studies between abstraction and contextualization, subject and object, and structural determinism and individual agency.

Peterson argues in the first chapter of the book that much of the recent scholarship on the body has failed to address how emerging perspectives on and technologies of the body have shaped broader understandings of health, illness and normality. Peterson's book aims to fill that gap and, even more significantly, to redress what he sees as the overly abstracted nature of 'embodiment' within contemporary body studies. Thus, Peterson attempts throughout the subsequent five chapters to examine conceptualizations of embodiment within their distinct historical and social environments. He does so first by interrogating the notion of the 'natural' body in chapter two, citing recent developments in neuroscience and stem cell research that arguably unsettle existing ideas about the biophysical body's 'naturalness'. Peterson asserts that popular representations of such technologies are underpinned by a contemporary form of Darwinian logic, through which they construct scientific 'advances' as inevitable and desirable. In his effort to examine the social processes involved in such constructions, however, Peterson tends to privilege what he characterizes as the 'powerful interests' at work (p. 46), whilst paying relatively little attention to the variability in public acceptance of media accounts. Although Peterson does acknowledge that media effects are notoriously difficult to measure, he none the less seems to suggest that audiences are rather un-thinking when it comes to the promise of body technologies.

Peterson concentrates in chapter three on existing techniques for 're-shaping and perfecting bodies' in relation to cross-cultural differences in beauty ideals, the increasing commodification of the body, and growing social expectations concerning the individual's capacity to control his/her physical condition. Peterson's analysis is arguably more balanced here than in chapter two, in so far as it addresses both the socio-political forces which shape the drive to achieve bodily perfection, and criticisms that have been levelled at theories which over-emphasize such forces. Peterson moves in chapter four to a historical analysis of 'the mechanisms and socio-political dimensions of body classification' (p. 80) and various social responses to such processes. A particularly interesting section focuses on the development of genetic testing, pharmacogenetics and Viagra, raising important questions about the implications of these and other interventions for social understandings of 'risk', 'disease', 'wellness' and 'health'.

Chapter five builds upon topics introduced earlier in the book, drawing attention to how growing individualism, medicalization and consumerism within Western societies influence understandings and behaviours pertaining to the body. In it, Peterson takes a critical approach to complementary/alternative therapies, pointing out that these are not necessarily incompatible with traditional biomedicine and that their emphasis on confession and 'care of the self' may well serve to reinforce power relations between experts and lay people. Peterson concludes with a chapter on 'the future of the body', in which he claims (somewhat disappointingly) that 'there is little reason to doubt that many body technologies, particularly enhancement technologies, will in time become routinely used' (p. 136), as if the outcome of the complex processes he describes throughout the book is a foregone conclusion. None the less, the book is insightful, original and well written. It makes a valuable addition to the sociology of the body.

In *The Sociology of the Body*, Cregan organizes her discussion around notions of the body as 'object', 'object' and 'subject'. Within each of these conceptual 'umbrellas', Cregan identifies key authors, explains how their ideas emerged over time, provides critical analyses of their work and briefly outlines related arguments. The entire discussion is then framed within a theory of 'constitutive bodily abstraction' (James, *Nation Formation*, 1996).

Part One – the object body – addresses perspectives which treat the body as the product of collective understandings and social forces, into which Cregan groups scholarship by Elias, Aries, Foucault and Bourdieu. The discussion of Bourdieu's work, in particular, is impressively clear (and frequently humorous). Its only weakness is its exclusive focus on *cultural capital* (and its relevance to social location), and omission of the other forms of capital that Bourdieu identified. This point seems significant given that Cregan's book will likely be read by undergraduates who have little prior knowledge of Bourdieu. In Part Two, the first chapter addresses the symbolic significance of the body and its excretions and presents the concept of abjection as a semiotic and embodied phenomenon. Here Cregan draws a number of interesting linkages – and distinctions – between Mary Douglas' and Julia Kristeva's works, arguing compellingly that the latter's focus on a *universal* abject ultimately dismisses Douglas' attention to cultural diversity. The second chapter in Part Three, however, is less a further exploration of bodily abjection than an introduction to the ideas presented in the following section.

Part Three explores theorizations which emphasize the subjective experience of embodiment, focusing on scholarship by Donna Haraway and Susan Bordo. Chapter six traces the main considerations in Haraway's work and concludes that her increasing fascination with poststructuralist theory leads Haraway to ignore, erroneously, the physical realities of embodiment. In turn, chapter seven discusses Bordo's *Unbearable Weight* and *The Male Body*, commending both for their attention to the complex materiality of aged, 'raced', classed and gendered bodies. These chapters are perhaps the strongest in the text. The ideas presented in them and earlier sections are revisited in the conclusion, which examines alternative conceptualizations of embodiment as they are reflected in debates around stem cell technology.

Cregan's book benefits significantly from its attention to the historical development of ideas pertaining to embodiment; however, while its organization around 'object', 'abject' and 'subject' bodies makes sense in principle, its execution is rather weak because only the first and third sections provide thorough discussions of their subject matter. Finally, it is not clear that the concept of constitutive bodily abstraction – which is returned to repeatedly in the text – adds much to the analysis.

Waskul and Vannini's *Body/Embodiment* differs significantly from the other two books reviewed, both in its focus on a single theoretical viewpoint – symbolic interactionism – and its inclusion of original empirical research. The nineteen essays in the collection draw upon work by key figures within that perspective and the pragmatist tradition. They are organized into five sections based on the particular dimensions of the body that authors emphasize: bodily 'reflexivity', 'performance', 'meaning', 'culture' and 'story'.

In the first essay in Part one, 'The Looking-Glass Body', Crossley critiques sociological efforts to conceptualize 'reflexive embodiment' (p. 21), arguing persuasively that interactionist understandings of reflexivity (as being embedded in social networks and norms while not reduced to them) provide a means of overcoming the shortcomings of existing theoretical frameworks. Essays by Charmaz and Rosenfeld and Schrock and Boyd examine how reflexivity shapes bodily experiences and practices in the context of chronic illness and transsexual status passage, respectively. Part Two, 'The Dramaturgical Body' focuses instead on the ways that bodies are 'fashioned, crafted, negotiated and manipulated' (p. 69). In two of the more analytically sophisticated essays in this section, Cahill examines various cultural conventions through which the public body is 'made' public, while the private body is carefully 'kept' private, and Gardner and Gronfein employ Goffman's notion of 'territories of the self' to explore the boundary-maintenance strategies employed by people with disabilities. Part Three, 'The Phenomenological Body' begins with Monaghan's discussion of the indeterminacy of human bodies. Drawing from his research on body-building, nightclub

security work and fatness, Monaghan focuses on the mutability of meanings attached to the bodies in these sites. Brandt's essay next examines interactions between horses and their female riders, arguing that embodiment – rather than the mind and spoken language – provides for their intersubjectivity. Part three concludes with Huggins' discussion of popular representations of drug addiction, which he interprets as serving to construct the addict's body as a spectacle of the grotesque. The three essays in Part Four, 'The Socio-Semiotic Body', focus largely on the social and political dynamics whereby definitions of signs are formed, reproduced and negotiated, while those in Part Five, 'The Narrative Body', examine the discursive resources individuals use to construct embodied selfhood. The collection concludes with a chapter by Clinton Sanders, in which he outlines the many ways in which the body is central to key interactionist themes, including 'social and personal identity, constructions of the self, emotional experience, the acquisition and display of power' (p. 281).

In sum, while Cregan's work provides a useful analysis of numerous important approaches to the body, and Peterson's raises several original questions about contemporary understandings of embodiment, the Waskul and Vannini text instead draws attention to (both minor and more significant) variations of emphasis within a single theoretical perspective on the body. With only a few exceptions, the essays in the collection are engaging and well written, although another round of proofreading would have benefited the book. Most significantly, it provides a number of good examples of theoretically-informed empirical work, making it a resource that is altogether too rare within the body studies literature.

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Fineman, Stephen (ed.) **The Emotional Organization: Passions and Power** Blackwell Publishing 2008 240 pp. £29.99 (paperback)

There can be little doubt that emotion has come of age in organization studies. Over the past two decades it has emerged from the margins of the field to become a legitimate sub-discipline that engages with, and deeply informs contemporary conceptions of managerial work. Few scholars have contributed more to this mainstreaming than Stephen Fineman, who has consistently championed a social understanding of emotions as both a constructed product and a constituent aspect of the emotional arenas in which they arise. This latest collection of essays richly demonstrates the maturity that this sub-discipline has now achieved. The book is threaded through with critical perspectives on emotion work that explore issues of power and voice through the lenses of postmodern, poststructuralist, and postemotional critiques. These multi-faceted analyses will be warmly welcomed by those organizational researchers who take seriously the view that emotions are here to stay.

In the introductory chapter, which maps out the conceptual territory of the collection, Fineman invokes the notion of 'emotionology', that is, 'society's "take" on the way certain emotions are to be directed and expressed' (p. 2). Emotionologies reflect and reproduce the political, cultural and moral discourses that define the organizational contexts in which emotions are constructed. As emotional arenas, all organizations are infused with emotionologies that often act at subtle levels where they may remain unexplored and unchallenged. This book is committed to exposing just such emotionologies. Chapters contributed by scholars in the UK, USA, Canada, Finland and Australia are structured into two broad themes, 'Emotional arenas' and 'Shifting identities', followed by a very brief epilogue to round off the collection.

The emotional arenas theme is comprehensively explored in nine chapters including patient–nurse interactions in a hospital (chapter two), the experience of burnout in front-line prison officers (chapter three), crisis work with rape victims (chapter four), the regulation of ‘good cheer’ amongst workers at a university recreation centre (chapter five), the institutionalization of violence and abuse in a job centre (chapter six) and a telephone call centre (chapter seven), the gendered dynamics of web work (chapter eight) and home-based telework (chapter nine), and the use of humour in management consulting (chapter ten). All of these chapters are refreshingly empirical, enriching already well established emotional arenas such as caregiving and service working, as well as adding new vistas to the emotion work literature. In addition to this empirical wealth, these contributions offer new theoretical insights that suggest avenues for future research. For instance, how do emotion workers resolve the inevitable dilemmas that arise when two or more emotionologies intersect in any given emotional arena (chapter four); how does the regulation of emotion by peers (chapter five) or customers (chapters six and seven) differ from the managerial sources of control that are more conventionally assumed; and how are emotional experiences at work related to differing perceptions of the passage of time (chapter eight)?

Whereas the first section coheres strongly around the theme of emotional arenas, ‘Shifting identities’ provides less distinctiveness as an organizing rubric for the four chapters that comprise the second theme of this book. Chapters eleven and twelve both provide very well written and well argued critiques of emotional intelligence from a gender perspective, but this topic is curiously out of sync with the emotionology focus of the rest of the book. I hope that these chapters will not be overlooked by researchers seeking critical perspectives on emotional intelligence. Chapter thirteen is concerned with the transnationalization of emotions as globalizing markets demand emotionologies that can transcend traditional national and cultural boundaries. In effect then, this chapter addresses a meta-arena for emotion work. Finally chapter fourteen discusses the underexplored relationship between emotion and aesthetics, suggesting that these two dimensions of organizational life cannot be treated as distinct categories if we are meaningfully to theorize work in the emergent aesthetic economy. Although these four chapters undoubtedly engage with issues of identity, I would argue that, far from being limited to this section alone, the entire book is saturated with identity talk. For instance, chapter two discusses the professional mask that nurses consciously maintain, chapter five talks about ‘real’ and ‘fake’ selves, and chapter nine considers the emotions related to professional and parental identities. Identities are emotional; emotion work and identity work are intimately intertwined dimensions of organizational life. Fineman certainly hints at this connection in his introductory chapter, but I would have liked to see this idea more thoroughly developed in the epilogue.

Several other themes leapt out at me as strong possibilities for guiding the future research agenda in this sub-discipline, but these too were left to the reader’s imagination rather than being developed at the close of the book. For instance, although the critical perspective that pervades the whole volume is very valuable, it nevertheless privileges the social at the expense of the agentic. Chapter two makes a plea for more attention to agency, and indeed humanity, in studies of emotion work, but this theme is conspicuously absent for much of the remainder of the book. And despite the transnationalization theme of chapter thirteen, and the racial prejudice evident in chapter seven, this book is largely dedicated to a white western perspective on emotion. It seems to me that further development of our understanding of emotional organizations will require a widening of this scope.

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Jessop, B. **State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach** Polity Press 2008 301 pp. £60.00 (hardback) £17.99 (paperback)

Readers will want to know that 'Jessop (forthcoming, n.d.)', listed in the bibliography to *State Power*, is *The State*. Jessop locates his long-standing, on-going work in this area not just within Marx's general purview but specifically with reference to the 'Introduction' of 1857 to the *Grundrisse*. It thus seems to fall within Marx's uncompleted scheme where 'Summary of bourgeois society in the form of the state' appears as a major enterprise alongside the heading 'Capital' (Carver, *Texts on Method*, p. 82). *State Power*, in presumed contrast to the *magnum opus* to come, is primarily a methodological work presenting Jessop's Strategic-Relational Approach (SRA), reviewing its development ('my fifth book' on this theme, p. 12), commenting critically on various theorists as source-material, and cashing out this *Ansicht* (as Marx put it) in discussions of gender, globalization and the European Union. The focus, as ever, is on the 'political economy of contemporary capitalism', to which in recent years Jessop (in partnership with Ngai-Ling Sum) has prefixed the term 'cultural' (pp. 47–52).

The genre of *State Power* is like that of a memoir, maybe even a *Bildungsroman* of struggle and renewal, reluctant accretion and circumspect updating, combined with spirited defence of an initial position. The whistle comes cleanest at the end, where we encounter Jessop's firm dedication to 'description, understanding and explanation of economic and political conduct' (p. 237), to 'rigour' (p. 243), even 'social causation' and 'causal relationships' (pp. 52, 230), albeit construed as 'contingent necessity' or *contingent necessity* (p. 232). Underpinning this is a commitment to 'critical realism' as 'a philosophy of science' (p. 45), such that all these terms make sense within certain interrelated ontological and epistemological stipulations, and indeed the project of theorizing this way – which descends from a certain reading of Weber – becomes important. Grafted onto this is a rather clunky 'evolutionary' framework of 'mechanisms of variation, retention and selection' (p. 236), minus any teleological 'evolutionism' (pp. 240–1). Jessop terms this an 'evolutionary turn' (p. 236) but says little about precisely how and why it arose in his thinking.

As ever, Jessop is excellent on the paradox of the state: it is a part of the social whole, yet it defines and orders the whole, and his throwaway line on 'the logic (or perhaps, "illogic")' (pp. 7–8) of this paradox surely deserved lengthy exploration. His overall substantive project is about as exciting as it gets: 'historical-materialist analyses of the capitalist state, the profit-oriented, market-mediated dynamics of capital accumulation, and the structural coupling and co-evolution of the economic and political in capitalist social formations' (p. 244). However, he confines his objects of analysis to 'North America, East Asia and Western Europe' (p. 209), which is surely odd – what about the emerging economies of Southeast Asia, the 'BRIC' (Brazil-Russia-India-China) economies, the uniqueness of the Chinese 'model' (if there is one), and the further heterogeneity of East Asia? North America of course includes Mexico, and precisely where does Western Europe end? The EU now extends to the eastern Baltic, Bulgaria and Romania. Is there really a 'triad region' as Jessop presumes (p. 209)? Are there important state forms and formations missing from this grand theorization? Is the developed/developing binary still the best analytical way of approaching global political economy? Obviously, I have some doubts here.

The major news since the 1990s is that Jessop has taken a cultural turn with this grand project, and lately, a linguistic turn into discourse, meaning and semiosis, a term which could do with rather more definitional work than he affords us here (pp. 47–52, 233–6). The inevitable ontological, epistemological and praxis-oriented tensions that arise are then held, rather unsteadily, in 'two modes of observing natural and social systems', the ultimate goal of which is 'a natural science of society alongside interpretive, hermeneutic, and

phenomenological approaches to social action' (p. 234). Having wet his feet in the waters of post-structuralism and postmodernism, Jessop then warns readers against taking any precipitate plunges and going in way over their heads. There are 'two complementary temptations' attending the 'semiotic moment', he writes: 'radical social constructivism', and loss of agency in the human subject (p. 238). *State Power* thus records a process through which Jessop has added various intellectual currents in the humanities and social sciences – gender, feminism, interpretivism, discourse, globalization, and others – to his work on the state and then stirred the mix as little as possible.

I fear that Jessop-ites will be dismayed by the apparent flirtations (likened to Marx's 'coquetting with Hegel', p. 27) with the gendered temptations that lie beyond the muscular masculinism of historical materialism and critical realism, and indeed any social theory modelled – however ultimately – on the 'hard-ass' sciences. A page of warnings against constructivism and the linguistic turn hardly suffices for an engagement with some thirty years or so of philosophical hard graft and imaginative reversals: where is Wittgenstein? Barthes? Derrida? Not here. Butler's performativity gets a brief look-in, but no real discussion. Given the number of times she herself 'had a go' at defining the term, it is hardly to be taken at face-value. And, at the risk of sounding even more like a philosophy tutor, I would expect considerable discussion – rather than mere ostensive reference – to whatever-it-is that Jessop categorizes as material, material practice, material construction, the extra-discursive, the extra-semiotic, the natural, and indeed the economic, where that category is in apparent elision with this evidently ontological realm. To that realm, the discursive and the semiotic somehow – we aren't told how – stand distinct and opposed (pp. 79, 234–43).

The strongest sections of the book, for this reviewer, were the sharp, illuminating, even off-beat critical encounters with Marx, Gramsci, Poulantzas and Foucault (all previously published and appearing here in slightly revised form). These are delightful essays where Jessop poses questions, selects texts, and considers the man and his politics very deftly, presenting us with thoughtful dialogues that are generous and inclusive to both subject and reader.

I am hopeful and expectant, then, that Jessop will get to *The State* before too long. But how many times did Marx rewrite and revise all those versions of *Capital*?

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Lampard, R. and Peggs, K. Identity and Repartnering After Separation Palgrave
McMillan 2007 255 pp. £55 (hardback)

The increase in union dissolution, both of divorce and cohabitation disruption, is transforming the experience of repartnering. The rates and individual chances of repartnering are well-established, but few studies examine the repartnering process from the perspectives of the separated/divorced themselves. This volume, *Identity and Repartnering After Separation*, is an important step in examining how the de-traditionalization of conjugal relationships and individualization (e.g., individual agency or personal autonomy) influence the process of repartnering and post-relationship identities. Toward this end, Lampard and Peggs draw upon a rich set of sociological concepts, including 'pure relationships' (Giddens), 'liquid love' (Bauman), and 'risk society' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim). Focusing on Britain, the authors use quantitative (1081 respondents from the 2001–2002 General Household Survey) and qualitative (81 in-depth, open-ended interviews) data to develop novel insights into the relationship experiences of separated/divorced people, their motivations to repartner or not

repartner, and how their relationship histories influence their personal identities. While Lampard and Peggs use quantitative data to illustrate how individual-level characteristics affect repartnering behaviours and orientations, this is a qualitative study, by and large, and uses in-depth interviews to demonstrate that personal perspectives on conjugal relationships and commitment are important sources of individual variation in repartnering.

The substantive discussions on risk and identity in chapters six and seven respectively represent Lampard and Peggs' main contribution. Chapter six shows how the perception of risk influences repartnering decisions. The much in vogue concept of 'risk' stresses that individualization or personal autonomy in high modern societies can harbour a tremendous amount of uncertainties and anxieties, because this condition of person freedom involves a concomitant decrease of personal security. The individual freedom in choices of conjugal relationships – due in significant part to liberalized divorce legislation and tolerance of cohabitation – presents so-called 'risky opportunities', or an increasing number of options. The privatization of conjugal life is an attractive expansion of individual rights, but this condition has destabilized unions, because 'as individuals in intimate relationships we are obsessed with the maintenance of the self' (p. 47). According to Lampard and Peggs, this transition from permanent conjugal relationships to so-called 'pure relationships' has changed our attitudes toward repartnering. In particular, past union histories, relationship baggage, and personal identities are powerful factors in repartnering decisions. Lampard and Peggs observe that the failure of a prior relationship can increase the perceived risk of repartnering. The authors demonstrate that separated/divorced persons are often reluctant to repartner because of heightened awareness and anxieties about the potential for a repeat relationship failure, and its deep financial, emotional, and psychological consequences.

In chapter seven, Lampard and Peggs outline the connection between identity (sense of self) and the decision to repartner. This chapter details how an individual's sense of self is embedded in their habitus, which implies that union disruption is also a disruption of sense of self. The authors argue that, although union dissolution is a difficult experience for all involved, it also encourages a time of reflection and personal re-evaluation. This change in identity and increased options in repartnering creates opportunities for them to reframe their sense of self and adjust their personal views on commitment.

The creation of an independent post-relationship self generates a disinclination to repartner. 'Dependence is fast becoming a derogatory term', according to the authors, 'and being independent has become a source of pride . . . worries about the loss of newfound independence are a reason for not wishing to embark on a co-resident intimate couple relationship' (p. 205). Moreover, Lampard and Peggs observe that the moral and/or cultural commitment to marriage as a social institution is rare among the separated and divorced; most do not make a distinction regarding whether their next partnership will be a marital or cohabiting union. Their main emphasis is on commitment to a specific relationship and partner, and perhaps even to a 'cultural notion of how contemporary (individualized) relationships should be' (p. 212).

Though this volume has numerous strengths, there are some things that are lacking. First, although Lampard and Peggs are careful to include former cohabitants, their analysis stops short at offering direct comparisons of former cohabitants to former marrieds. Of course, data limitations appear to be an issue here, as generalizations are difficult (if not impossible) with qualitative data. That said, Lampard and Peggs give insufficient attention to potential differences in repartnering (perceptions of risk) and post-relationship identities between former cohabitants and divorced persons. To be sure, some cohabitations are identical or similar to marriage, but others are quite different, which could have a bearing on how a past relationship failure influences the risk of repartnering. Second, the presentation of the qualitative data is, in certain places, difficult to navigate. In particular, the purpose of chapter

five is elusive. This chapter is comprised largely of interview quotes organized into themes (e.g., readiness to repartner), but contains too sparse an interpretation of the data. The chapter concludes with a typology of repartnering, but this would be more forceful (and the chapter more purposeful) had the chapter been better organized toward developing the reported repartnering orientations into distinct categories of behaviours or attitudes.

Overall, Lampard and Peggs are successful in integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches in their effort to understand more fully the repartnering process. Although repartnering is not new per se, the options available for new union formations and the ways in which a partner might be selected have changed and expanded. This volume contributes to our understanding of the complex and multifaceted aspects of the repartnering process. In contemporary Britain not everyone is interested in (re)marriage, but research reveals that nearly three-quarters of formerly partnered people would like to live with a partner in five year's time. Thus, this relevant and readable book is of interest to a substantial portion of the population as well as academics interested in a deeper examination of this salient social topic.

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Miller, Peter and Rose, Nikolas **Governing the Present: Adminstrating Economic, Social and Personal Life** Oxford: Polity Press 2008 246 pp. £50 (hardback) £16.99 (paperback)

Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose's book partakes of the recent trend of republishing key texts from two decades of work on 'governmentality,' a movement which has also brought about the publication of Foucault's 1978 and 1979 series of lectures at the *Collège de France*. In these lectures, Foucault addresses the (then in its infancy) transformation in the arts of government triggered by the neo-liberal reflection articulated around freedom and the critique of the state. He does so by sketching a genealogy of the governmental rationalities and practices – which he terms 'governmentality' – that made such a reflection and transformation possible. While Foucault's lectures generated little interest in France, in the Anglo-Saxon world where the full force of the neo-liberal revolution was being most keenly felt, they brought about the development of a considerable body of work: 'governmentality studies'. Miller and Rose are two of these scholars who, during the 1990s, participated in the development of this field by further elaborating Foucault's concepts and using them to analyse the transformations in governmental logic brought about by liberal and neo-liberal theories. The book reproduces, together with an introduction written especially for this occasion, seven articles on governmentality which were first published by Miller and Rose in the period from 1990 to 1997.

For those new to Miller and Rose's work on governmentality, this collection of essays provides easy access to some of their most influential articles on the topic. Indeed, the seven essays are, together, cited more than 2300 times by other scholars according to *Google Scholar's* citation index. Furthermore, the newly written introduction together with the choice of articles reproduced and the way they are organized, makes this collection of essays an informative overview of Miller and Rose's major analytical concepts and arguments in this field. So, for example, the first three chapters discuss key concepts like 'problematization,' 'subjectification' or 'technologies of government,' while the last chapter presents one of Miller and Rose's main arguments: namely, that one can distinguish, historically, between three successive 'families of governmentality' – liberal, welfarism and advanced liberal – each with their particular characteristics. Similarly, the series of empirical studies on the

methods developed by sociologists, psychologists or managers to govern aspects of human life such as consumption, marriage or work remind us of the fundamental role knowledges play in rendering aspects of existence thinkable and amenable to intervention. This overview of Miller and Rose's work on governmentality makes the book a welcome addition to more general introductions to the field of governmentality like Mitchell Dean's *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (1999), or Nikolas Rose's *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (1999).

While the book provides an easy access to and a good overview of Miller and Rose's past research on governmentality, it could have been better still had the authors addressed two particular issues. First, it would have been useful to at least mention some of the criticisms which have been levelled against a governmentality approach, such as its inability to address resistance against neo-liberalism or its incapacity to study the 'messy' side of policy implementation. Such a mention would have been a welcome addition to the introductory chapter's otherwise comprehensive overview of governmentality studies. Second, it would have been helpful to have a few words on the way the literature on governmentality has developed since the publication of Miller and Rose's articles. Indeed, since the late 1990s, scholars in the field have progressively abandoned the exploration of neo-liberalism's impact and have started to use the concepts developed by the early literature on governmentality to address a plethora of related and unrelated issues including colonialism/neo-colonialism, globalization or, more recently, attempts to render the market and multinational corporations more 'ethical.' Miller and Rose do mention some of these developments in their two-page conclusion to the book, but a more comprehensive discussion of these current developments would certainly have improved the book's contribution to the literature.

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Peet, R. Geography of Power: The Making of Global Economic Policy Zed Books 2007
216 pp. £65.00 (hardback) £18.99 (paperback)

Richard Peet has written an insightful and highly critical account of the ascendance and consequences of neo-liberal economic policy around the globe. In Peet's view, the triumph of neo-liberalism is virtually complete: a regime of privatization, deregulation, welfare retrenchment, tax cuts, fiscal prudence and monetary stability dominates the policy stance of democratic capitalist nations, international financial institutions, and, by imposition, much of the developing world. The consequences have entailed a reversal of growth, employment, and redistributive gains of the Keynesian era as well as an intensification of income inequality within and between countries, thwarted development in many poor nations, and new concentrations of economic and political power. For the author, conventional critiques of neo-liberalism do not go nearly far enough.

The central argument of the book is straightforward. The neo-liberal policy regime's current hegemony rests on the economic power of global financial capital, whose interests neo-liberalism ultimately serves, as well as the ideological dominance of neo-liberal economics and economists, and the political power of capital and their intellectual supporters. As to economic, ideological and political power, the contemporary era is marked by the rise of vast accumulations of internationally mobile capital. The actors and institutions that hold and direct the movement of this capital reside largely in a few global cities in the Western World. Powered by claims to rational-scientific rigour, and generated by leading scholars at elite

institutions, the predominant economic theories of new classical and neo-liberal economies fundamentally shape the interpretation of the economic world made by political elites and citizens. The power of capital to exit or refuse to enter nations' disciplines policy makers in developed and developing countries alike, and inexorably fosters neo-liberal reforms. This structural power of mobile capital is constantly reinforced at an ideational level by the weight of neo-liberal economic theory and policy prescription. At a political level, representatives of international capital, their intellectual supporters, national government policy makers and top-level officials of international governance institutions readily interact, exchange jobs and jointly reinforce the commitment to the market-conforming policy regime. The institutional position and power of this spatially concentrated elite is augmented by the power of capital to effectively dominant electoral processes in rich democracies and elsewhere.

Peet offers a rich, historically grounded analysis of the economic, ideational, and political dimensions of this geography of power in the first four chapters of the book. The fifth chapter provides a case study of post-apartheid South Africa that illustrates the mechanisms by which neo-liberal hegemony shapes and constrains development policy in poor nations. Chapter six considers the promise of and notable constraints on 'counter hegemonic' policies generated by diverse social movements, UN development agencies, unorthodox academic experts, developmental NGOs and Latin American leftist leaders such as Hugo Chávez. Chapter seven concludes with a critical appraisal of American-led neo-conservatism (that is, the active push for economic freedom and democracy) and of a contemporary neo-imperialism of spatially concentrated Western economic and political power and its exercise across the globe.

Overall, the book's strengths are apparent. While much of the theory is not new, Peet skillfully weaves together classic insights from Gramsci and Foucault on ideological hegemony and the power of discourse, with arguments from structural dependence and elite theories on economic and political institutional power. The result is a deeply textured and provocative account of the triumph of neo-liberalism. In addition, Peet offers a very informative (and highly critical) analysis of the recent efforts to resuscitate the neo-liberal Washington Consensus by well-know academics such as Dani Rodrik, Jeffrey Sachs and others – efforts that entail varying emphases on promoting more aid and debt relief, on more adequately accounting for social impacts of reform and on fostering good institutions (e.g., corruption-free, competent bureaucracies). Finally, readers will gain from Peet's comprehensive review of the actors and institutions that generate alternative economic policies and development strategies and from his insightful analysis of the strong constraints on these counter-hegemonic efforts.

That said, sympathetic readers may legitimately raise some complaints. First, a vast amount of research in political economy has clearly shown that the structural power of capital has not resulted in a convergence around a neo-liberal form of capitalism in the rich democracies. Domestic, political and economic institutions as well as the political power of union movements, social democratic parties and pro-welfare state constituencies have effectively limited the impact of capital mobility on welfare state retrenchment in European co-ordinated market economies; the most substantial neo-liberal reforms of the post-1970s era have transpired in the already liberal market economies of the English-speaking world. Second, the large majority of studies of the impact of capital mobility on taxation have revealed that while liberalization has been associated with reductions in nominal capital tax rates, tax bases have been broadened and the effective tax rate on capital has actually increased modestly between the 1970s and early years of the twenty-first century in the OECD world.

Finally, while Peet spends much of the book critically appraising the impacts of neo-liberalism on poor nations, there is surprisingly little detail on the relatively successful

'counter hegemonic' development strategy pursued in China, India and several other nations in South and South-east Asia. That is, these nations have relatively successfully pursued what unorthodox Cambridge University economist Ha-Joon Chang calls a state-led strategy of industrial, trade and technology policies (*Kicking Away the Ladder*, 2002). It is with some irony that this policy strategy entails the same mix of export-orientation, protectionism, strategic (and often heavy) state interventions in human and physical capital investment as well as in science and technological innovation as the policy strategy of nineteenth century Britain and the twentieth century USA during their global ascendance. The specifics and successes as well as the political context of this arguably non-liberal development strategy could have been more systematically considered in Peet's analysis.

On balance, this is a well written, carefully crafted and certainly provocative analysis and critique of contemporary global economic policy. It can be strongly recommended to scholars and students of social theory and international political economy; consistent with Peet's own goals for the book, it can also be clearly recommended to scholars, students and activists who desire a globalization with substantially more equality, social justice and democracy.

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Wacquant, Loïc Urban Outcasts Cambridge: Polity 2008 342 pp. £17.99 (paperback)

Jolted by his proximity to the ghetto of Chicago and driven by his sense of scientific and civic duty, Loïc Wacquant has made a highly significant contribution to analysing the new social issue: 'advanced marginality'. For Wacquant, advanced marginality is the product of particular socio-economic, political and spatial dynamics within which the 'precariat' has emerged as the new central figure of the post-Fordist and post-Keynesian order. While Wacquant asserts that the precariat is virtually incapable of independent political action, he does identify an alternative to the neoliberal response of punishing the poor. This alternative is to reintegrate urban marginals into society through a new set of universal citizenship rights. Wacquant bases his analysis on a detailed comparative study of the 'Black belt' of Chicago and the 'Red belt' of the outskirts of Paris and argues against the 'transatlantic convergence' of urban poverty by showing how political (in)action is decisive in the formation and elimination of urban marginality. In short, Wacquant demonstrates the devastating social consequences of neoliberalism while rejecting social democratic policies in favour of a radical political solution to urban poverty.

In the Prologue to the book, Wacquant highlights the reappearance of 'poverty, collective violence and ethnoracial divisions' in the cities of the most advanced post-industrial nations (p. 25). Notably, Wacquant argues that urban riots are not irrational disorders, but rather logical responses to 'violence from above' in the forms of economic, spatial and cultural marginalization. From this perspective, riots such as that in Hartcliffe, Bristol (my home city) are comprehensible as a form of 'infra-political protest' by a disenfranchised group (p. 30).

Part One of the book traces the shift from the 'communal ghetto' to the 'hyperghetto' through a detailed case study of the South side of Chicago. The 'communal ghetto' was a cross-class space with its own 'parallel social structure'. It generated a sense of dignity in adversity, whereas the depopulated and disorganized 'hyperghetto' generates fear and loathing due to endemic violence and insecurity. Collective organization and action have given way to individual strategies of subsistence ranging from borrowing and odd jobbing to petty crime and drug dealing. While rooting ghetto transformation in a changing political economy, Wacquant highlights how hyperghettos are products of political inaction justified by the moralistic discourse of the 'underclass'. This underclass 'legend' is challenged in

Chapter Three by a macro-structural analysis of urban poverty which utilises survey data to demonstrate how the ghetto has imploded, thereby dividing the Black community along class lines to form a 'dual sociospatial structure' (p. 118). Wacquant shows how a periphery of middle class Blacks live divided from a core of marginalized Blacks who are predominantly jobless, reliant on welfare, lacking in material and social capital and trapped within the hyperghetto. Wacquant provides an ethnographic account of how multiple forms of insecurity are experienced by the residents of North Lawndale. Their material existence is maintained precariously through a street economy dominated by drug dealing tolerated by a police force considered widely to be 'an additional vector of violence and insecurity' (p. 129). Here, public space is diminished due to endemic fear, and public life has contracted as community organizations have disappeared and public services have been dismantled.

Part Two of the book contrasts the Quatre Mille estate with its Chicagoan counterpart to expose the idea of the 'French ghetto' as a 'sociological absurdity' (p. 160). Wacquant shows how, despite surface similarities, the hyperghetto and the *banlieue* are fundamentally different phenomena. The *banlieues* are much smaller and largely residential areas with significantly lower levels of material and social disadvantage and crime and violence. They are also more ethnically diverse and integrated. In essence, while hyperghettos are zones of racial containment overlaid with class divisions, the crisis of the *banlieues* is primarily a crisis of working class social reproduction. This part of the book focuses on the 'ground level' to show the daily realities of 'symbolic dispossession' in the two locales. Wacquant shows, skilfully, how territorial stigmatisation affects not only residents' dealings with state agencies and prospects for employment, but also romantic engagements. Wacquant discusses the residents' sophisticated stigma management strategies. He also demonstrates the ways in which social antagonism in the hyperghetto is still expressed in racial terms, while in the *banlieues* it takes the form of youth versus the rest of society. This discussion is developed further in Chapter Seven, in which Wacquant contrasts the transformation of the 'fabric of daily life' by violence in the hyperghetto, with the sporadic and externally focussed violence produced by the *banlieues*, such as the urban revolts of 2005.

Part Three develops the theoretical and policy dimensions of Wacquant's analysis, and sets out six characteristics of an ideal type of the still emerging 'regime of marginality' (pp. 233–47). Marginality, Wacquant argues, is largely impervious to macro-economic fluctuations and is concentrated in stigmatized zones which have lost a sense of place. These have become spaces from which residents seek to escape because the 'loss of hinterland' in the form of communal support structures have made them spaces of despair (pp. 243–4). Post-Fordist forms of wage labour are disintegrating the working class thereby producing a diverse and fragmented precariat that lacks a shared identity and project and is largely devoid of effective social and political representation. In Chapter Nine, Wacquant rejects the neoliberal policy of containing 'advanced marginality' within hyperghettos and prisons, and argues for a radical solution. The state must deliver a guaranteed income, free education and training, and quality housing, health and transport services enabling every citizen to live with dignity.

Written occasionally in the pugnacious style of the boxer wishing to knock out his intellectual opponents, this book demonstrates throughout Wacquant's desire to contribute to the struggle for social justice. However, this desire might also result in substituting demands of public intellectuals, such as the 'basic income' (p. 279), for the hitherto lack of agency of the precariat. While morally and politically enticing, it is debatable whether such solutions are an effective panacea for social ills, or satisfy the aspirations of the poor. This reservation notwithstanding, this book reminded me of why I became a sociologist.

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