Reviews of Recently-Published Academic Books in Sociology

March 2019 Reviews

1. The gang paradox: inequalities and miracles on the U.S.-Mexico border. Durán, Robert J. Columbia, 2018. 299p bibl index, 9780231181075 $90.00, 9780231181075 $30.00, 9780231543439 $29.99

This book could not be timelier with the current arguments on immigration and the Mexican border. Durán (Texas A&M) takes a social justice, social activist approach, using narrative and dispelling many myths about gang violence spilling over the border. From his research, he sees it as more of a question of moral panic than reality. What makes the book particularly noteworthy is that attention is given to New Mexico, largely bypassed with deference given to discussions of gangs and drug trafficking along the California and Texas borders, though he doesn't completely ignore these in the book. In his discussion of gangs, he includes groups that are ordinarily included in organized crime studies (e.g., biker gangs). Durán uses the most appropriate methodology for gang research, including ethnography, collaboration, and comparison. His theoretical foundation is sound and taps into a number of well-suited paradigms, including critical race theory. His introductory chapter gives a thorough explanation of his methodological and theoretical approaches, which will be of great value to readers. Durán's book is approachable and doesn't simply offer doom and gloom: he also offers glimmers of hope for at-risk youth. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.


The supposed righteousness of retribution has been a driving force of the legal system, without fully equating philosophical thinking that critically delineates the contours of blame and responsibility. Kelly (Tufts) challenges the prevailing retributivist theory of criminal justice, demonstrating the lack of alignment between law and morality. Arguably, the mismatch between criminal guilt and moral blame presents a moral problem for a punitive society that takes a judicial approach to social problems and criminals become second-class citizens for the rest of their lives. In the era of mass incarceration and its collateral damage, Kelly charges that it is time to revise norms that stigmatize and criminalize and address the consequential disconnect between the legal criteria of guilt and the moral criteria of blame. The Limits of Blame calls for a transformation in philosophical, legal, and public thinking about criminal justice. The book is beneficial in the areas of philosophy, jurisprudence, criminal law, penology, and criminal justice reform. It is a must read for all people vested in better understanding the current state of the criminal justice system, from over-policing to mass prosecutions and mass incarceration. Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

3. Decriminalizing domestic violence: a balanced policy approach to intimate partner violence. Goodmark, Leigh. California, 2018. 204p bibl index, 9780520295568 $85.00, 9780520295575 $29.95, 9780520968295 $29.95

This book will be controversial. Goodmark (Univ. of Maryland) argues that domestic violence has been overcriminalized to the detriment of victims and society. The author begins with a thorough history that notes that, historically, domestic violence was considered a family matter, not a justice system matter, with victims often treated with callous disregard by justice system actors. In the 1980s, a number of factors, including successful law suits and an increasing awareness of victim’s rights, led to substantial reform. The resultant justice system response was to criminalize all aspects of domestic violence,
regardless of the wishes of the victim or the severity of the offense. The author, who is well regarded as an expert in this area, argues for the use of the justice system for severe habitual offenders and for the development and use of treatment, alternative housing, and public education programs. This book is well written and within the grasp of readers with beginning college-level reading skills. It is well referenced and adequately indexed. Recommended for libraries serving departments of criminology, criminal justice, counseling, psychology, social work, or sociology as part of their basic holdings. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through professionals.

4. The Routledge companion to gender, sex and Latin American culture. ed. by Frederick Luis Aldama. Routledge, 2018. 436p bibl index, 9781138894952 $220.00, 9781315179728 $53.95
Latin America has a rich popular heritage due to a variety of cultures, peoples, and traditions. This volume explores the diversity and complexity of recent popular cultural expressions associated with gender, sex, and ethnicity. The collection includes 36 essays on various topics, including general culture, film, art, photography, sports, dance, and theater. Most of the authors are connected to US academic institutions; notably, they come largely from literature and language backgrounds. The majority of the essays do not cover traditional literary topics, illustrating the recent scholarly shift away from traditional research toward all aspects of Latin American studies by literature and language faculty. Throughout, essays examine the intersectional identities of gender and sexuality and their relationship to aspects of Latin American popular culture. Many of the authors are beginning or mid-career in the field, though there are a few prominent scholars, including David William Foster, Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado, and Ilan Stavans. Though ethnicity references are found in several essays, only three focus specifically on Indigenous and Afro-Latin influences. This collection provides a window into the state of research occurring in the US on Latin American popular culture. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates and above.

Baker (Smith College) examines the history of the youth sex trade in the US, giving careful consideration to the race, gender, and social class of affected youth and to the impacts on policies and practices across time. Through detailed analyses of court cases and development of both responding agencies and government policies, Baker examines the prevalence of common youth sex trade narratives (which primarily focus on white, middle class women) versus the lived realities of youth involved in the US sex trade (varying across race, social class, gender, and sexual identity). Although Baker finds that progress has been made through “collaborative adversarial moments” from treating youth as criminals to empowered advocates for themselves, the author finds that media portrayals continue to play to stereotypes, and government policies tend to treat youth as criminals or victims. This book could be used in the disciplines of history, sociology, political science, education, and media studies. It could be paired with one or more of the documentaries described in the book to help students better understand firsthand experiences of affected youth and the agendas of the developers of each documentary. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates and above.

Readers seeking thoughtful depth and carefully reasoned analysis about the fissures in American society should appreciate the scope of Sawhill’s agenda. While pundits decry tax policy and welfare for the rich,
Sawhill’s careful condemnation shames these systems through erudition instead of sound bites. While appeals to justice clamor for redistributive strategies, she illuminates the inherent limits of that logic. Her grasp of patterns embedded across decades enables her to guide readers beyond the blinders of a particular election cycle to appreciate the steep dangers of rising inequality. She advocates for bold experiments designed to remedy deep wounds in the nature of work, the security of families, and the effectiveness of education, all seen as bedrock values that matter to Americans whose alienation from the status quo is rampant. Most provocative are the proposals for getting such policies off the ground, ranging from a renewed GI Bill, to evidence-based tax credits, to an overhaul of social security for more flexible benefits. Her knowledge of persistent American struggles adds persuasion to her voice, so accessible as to engage all interested readers. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

This comprehensive, well-written text on child welfare will be a welcome addition to libraries and readers everywhere. Lewandowski (Cleveland State) packs a load of resources in 300 compact pages. The book is divided in three parts, and uses an integrative, whole child approach to describing the history and current context of child welfare policy and practice. The first part offers an historical overview, which features little seen but outstanding photos and clear time lines of critical events in chart form. Part 2 adds further detail on child abuse and neglect definitions, decision-making, and out-of-home care options for all types of children. The third part offers an analysis of child abuse prevention, reunification, and adoption efforts, and ends with a summary of child health and well-being. Each chapter is concise and insightful, and offers extensive lists of suggested additional readings and discussion questions. Solid and readable, this book fills a significant void in the field. Though it is not flashy or overly engaging, this reviewer recommends it for anyone who has been searching for a single source for students to gain a thorough understanding of current child welfare policy and practice. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

307p bibl index, 9781440857409 $48.00, 9781440857416
Jones (School of Social Work, San Diego State Univ.) examines empirical evidence from studies on the efforts to prepare youth for life after being emancipated from foster care between the ages of 18 and 21. The book details the evolving research gathered on education, self-sufficiency, housing, health and mental health, parenting, involvement with the criminal justice system, and family and social support networking since the 1986 Independent Living Initiative was enacted. Jones points to the flaws in previous research and concludes that graduates of foster care deserve assistance up to their mid-20s, comparable to the prolonged adolescence of youth today. Education deficiency stems from poor childhood schooling or from multiple foster care placements leading to frequent changes in schools. San Pasqual Academy, a residential high school for foster teens in San Diego, achieved high rates for high school graduation and college attendance. Continuous mentoring and cultivating a social support network were sometimes preferred over family reunification. Jones advocates aid in housing, medical, and mental health care for youth, and better coordination between the various entities responsible for adolescents during care and after emancipation. Policy makers should read this well-organized research. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates and above.
9. Brown beauty: color, sex, and race from the Harlem Renaissance to World War II. Haidarali, Laila. New York University, 2018. 335p bibl index, 9781479875108 $99.00, 9781479802081 $35.00, 9781479865499

Scholarly discussions of the Harlem Renaissance–New Negro era usually focus on men. In Brown Beauty, Laila Haidarali (African American and women’s history, Univ. of Essex, UK) widens the lens to examine women and the development of a race conscious ideal of “brown-skin” beauty. The New Negro movement, most closely associated with Alain Locke, can be seen in part as a reflection of the mass migration of African Americans from the south to the north. The emergence of a substantial class of blacks in an urban industrial environment marked a significant departure from the rural agrarian past and the “Old Negro,” who had been represented by racist stereotypes of happy “Sambos,” “Mammies,” and "Aunt Jemimas.” As African Americans rejected the older images, they asserted instead images of proud and beautiful, cultured, upwardly mobile brown people. The author traces the ideal of brown feminine beauty in advertisements, literature, baby dolls, photography, and other forms of mass consumer culture. The material on German-born artist Rinald Reiss is especially illuminating. Haidarali offers a nuanced view of how the category brown, while "abstract, inexact and malleable" (from the introduction), was intended as a positive protest against the prevailing racism of the time. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels.

February 2019 Reviews


This compelling book details the emergence of a new feminist ideal that is less concerned with social justice than with individual women’s ability to balance home and work. This scathing critique of what Rottenberg (Univ. of London, UK) terms neoliberal feminism is presented through careful analyses of contemporary manifestos, such as Sheryl Sandberg’s Lean In (CH, Dec’13, 51-2183), Ann-Marie Slaughter’s Unfinished Business (Random House, 2016), Megyn Kelly’s Settle for More (Harper Luxe, 2016), and Ivanka Trump’s Women Who Work (Portfolio, 2017). To analyze these texts, Rottenberg draws on the theoretical work of Wendy Brown and others to frame neoliberalism as not only a set of economic practices but also a recasting of humans as “capital enhancing subjects.” From this perspective, Rottenberg argues that the new feminist ideal of succeeding at both high-powered employment and intensive mothering serves the free market more than it serves women. Rather than empowering women as a group, neoliberal feminism legitimates the privatization of caring work and erases the economic inequalities that make a felicitous work-family balance impossible for most women. In this accessible, fascinating book, Rottenberg brilliantly captures the contemporary discursive politics of feminism. This text should be widely read. Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.


The focus here is on American racial inequality. Valls (Oregon State) focuses on the perpetual plight of African Americans regarding liberty, equality, and justice, all of which ought to be granted to citizens of the US. This is a long-standing problem. It is argued that neither the racial injustices of the past nor present racial injustices have been addressed in any concrete way and that unless a massive shift occurs
in American culture, the immediate future does not project to be any different. Affirmative action, (de)segregation, civil rights, criminal justice, the Movement for Black Lives, and multiculturalism are but a few of the many topics and angles analyzed in this text. The author uses the metaphor of plague to illustrate the severity and pervasiveness of racial inequality. This is by no means farfetched, as racism so clearly persists. Though relying on various academic texts to support his arguments, the author has written a clear, accessible text. This is an important, unflinching look at a shameful part of American life, and its pages ought to have a wide audience. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty.

This ambitious book focuses on the complex social and individual psychological factors that provoke and perpetuate self-harm behaviors perceived by the individuals to relieve malaise. Brossard (sociology, Australian National Univ.) broadens the scope of inquiry beyond pathology to look at how people use self-injury as a means of self-control and protest against various kinds of social forces. The book is in two parts: "A Practice of Self-Control" and "A Social Positioning Practice." The first offers primarily descriptive ethnographic material, and the second presents a larger view of the social contexts and conditions of self-injury, including how family, school, gender identity, and social status can impact the person. Brossard bases the book on a five-year study in which she gathered narratives from 68 individuals online and from in-person interviews, and reviewed blogs and autobiographic material that depict conversations about, and descriptions of, the complex of self-harm behaviors. The volume is rich with quotes that describe the contexts and triggers precipitating these ritualized acts. Self-harm behaviors are depicted as performances that individuals use to manage tensions, embarrassments, abuse, and other affronts to help reestablish a sense of control.

Focusing on relationships on Facebook, Frenemies looks at the political polarization occurring on social media. Using data from studies in fields ranging from sociology to political science, Settle (government, College of William & Mary) examines and discusses the feedback loops that characterize the ways in which Facebook users engage with politicized posts. There are abundant charts, graphs, and sources that are skillfully synthesized to reveal how Facebook can cause political polarization. While relatively few Facebook users actually generate political content, many more exhibit tendencies to share content they come across. Settle also explores the ways in which online political and news interaction differs from news interaction occurring offline. Online communication leads to psychological polarization; one user is more likely to view another on the other side as an extremist. This, in turn, creates an echo chamber effect where the polarization continues. These tendencies can eventually lead to many social media users simply unfriending those with differing political views. In the final chapter, Settle provides questions for further study and suggestions for bridging the gulf between the political extremes. Summing Up: Recommended. All readers.
5. Queer people of color: connected but not comfortable. by Angelique Harris, Juan Battle, and Antonio (Jay) Pastrana Jr. First Forum Press, 2018. 145p bibl index, 9781626377158 $75.00, 9781626377837 $75.00

The 2010 Social Justice Sexuality Project (SJS) surveyed more than 5,000 queer black, Latinx, and Asian Pacific Islander Americans, collecting data on social and demographic characteristics. This volume reports survey findings (sorted by gender and ethnicity) related to sociopolitical (civic, political, social) involvement: i.e., the degree to which respondents participate in majority (public) organizations and events, in queer organizations and events, and in ethnic organizations and events. Chapters offer pertinent literature reviews and report survey results, including differences and similarities among the three ethnic groups and between women and men. Respondents indicated that both sexual orientation and ethnic status are significant components of their personal identity, with more citing sexual orientation. In general, respondent claims of connection to queer communities, and to some extent their degree of “outness” with family and friends, more than factors of age, income, or education, correlated with higher sociopolitical involvement, which perhaps is self-evident. Level of comfort within ethnic and queer communities variously correlated with sociopolitical involvement. The authors thus advocate cultivating greater opportunities to connect with queer communities to promote minority sociopolitical involvement. The SJS data set has been shared and is available online (http://socialjusticesexuality.com/) for supplementary analysis. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students, researchers, faculty, professionals.


Yarrow (senior fellow, Progressive Policy Institute) gives voice to the nearly 25 million men who are on what he considers “the sidelines of America,” missing from much of mainstream daily life in their communities. Who these men are, how this happened, and what can be done to change it are the focal points of this timely, well-written, thoroughly researched exposé. Through a variety of methods—e.g., comments posted on an interactive website; in-person/telephone/online interviews with men of all races/ethnicities, social classes, and ages and with women and parents of young men; discussions with myriad professionals, practitioners, scholars, and advocates; and content analysis of media reports and historical works—Yarrow extends analysis of this phenomenon beyond traditional “sidelined” men (i.e., incarcerated African American men and un/underemployed white working-class men) to men of all backgrounds who find themselves out of the mainstream. He explores the intersection of culture, economics, politics, and human agency in this process to paint a more nuanced and sophisticated portrait of these men and the consequences their situation poses for the future of dating, marriage, fatherhood, health, work, and civic and community life. A must for those interested in gender or masculinity studies. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.

7. Children and crime. Tang, Connie M. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 315p bibl index, 9781442257528 $90.00, 9781442257535 $44.00, 9781442257542 $41.50

Unable to find a textbook that thoroughly examines children’s roles as victims and as perpetrators of crimes, Tang (Stockton Univ.) combined research and theory to write Children and Crime. Beginning with three headline cases, the book seeks to answer a persistent question: “How do child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency relate?” This question is far too complex for one answer, and Tang’s textbook guides students through an exploration of the topic. The initial chapter introduces the three memorable
cases. The following 10 chapters are divided into explorations of child as victim, then child as perpetrator. A final synthesizing chapter illuminates what link exists between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency. Tang includes discussion of important contextual issues, including race, gender, and the juvenile justice system. Each chapter features learning outcomes, tables and figures, critical thinking questions, and a glossary. With its notable synthesis of theory and research, Children and Crime is more than a resource for students; it is valuable for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners in fields such as social work, psychology, education, and criminal justice. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

Reading more like a novel than an academic tome, Never Justice, Never Peace chronicles the Kanawha County, West Virginia, coal-miners’ strike of 1912–13. Extensive research coupled with engaging prose personalize the involvement of strike-participants ranging from ordinary miners to radical labor advocate Mother Jones. Her frequently cited orations drive the narrative. The strike follows a familiar pattern of class-based contention and worker exploitation leading to violence and death. It also shows the socioeconomic and political power wielded by capitalists. As a regional study, the book joins coauthor Lon Savage’s Thunder in the Mountains (1990) as a study of labor unrest in the West Virginia coal fields. Academics will appreciate this new book as an informative micro-study of early-20th-century labor relations, one that brings geographic breadth to trends found in more famous strikes such as Homestead and Pullman. General readers, especially those interested in the history of Appalachia, will find it a fascinating and accessible historical account. Summing Up: Recommended. General readers; lower-division undergraduates through faculty.

Hernandez (Fordham) is not only the codirector of the Center on Race, Law & Justice. She is also a mixed-race Afro-Latina, and her personal story as told in the preface helps enrich and inform this highly recommended work. She begins by examining the notion that increases in the numbers of multiracial Americans will eventually end racism in this country. Many have suggested, therefore, that old civil rights laws based on black and white should be reformed to address the "unique harms" suffered by multiracial people. But she notes that multiracial people are themselves subject to discrimination and racism, because they are seen as non-white. Thus, she concludes, it is unnecessary to reform civil rights laws that are based on a binary black-white distinction. Helpfully, she devotes chapters to multiracial discrimination in employment, education, housing and public accommodations, and the criminal justice system. Ultimately, she proposes to analyze issues of race discrimination by use of the sociopolitical race lens, which says that racial categories are "neither a biological nor a cultural construction but ... a group based social status informed by historical and current hierarchies and privileges." Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

10. Retirement and its discontents: why we won't stop working, even if we can. Silver, Michelle Pannor. Columbia, 2018. 279p bibl index, 9780231188562 $30.00, 9780231547925 $29.99
Retirement is often called the golden years: a well-deserved break, full of images of senior citizens golfing, traveling, and simply enjoying themselves after long years of working. However, this book
focuses on the discontents and uncertainties associated with this important life change. As the author argues, “For many people, retirement is supposed to be the ultimate goal and reward after a lifetime of work. Yet for some, it can be incredibly disappointing, frustrating, intimidating, and even more overwhelming than starting a career.” The book is organized in seven chapters (including a substantive introduction and conclusion), featuring stories and qualitative accounts of retirement. These stories come from five types of work: doctors, CEOs, elite athletes, professors, and homemakers. This is a timely focus on retirements, as many industrialized nations face an aging population. A qualitative approach focusing on the lived experience of retirees in creating retirement identities using theoretical tropes from Freud is also an interesting approach. This reviewer would have liked to see a stronger methodological discussion on the inclusion of these particular sectors, and a stronger discussion on income, class, and race in the understanding of the lived experience of retirement. With long quotes and personal stories, the middle chapters especially can be useful for classroom use. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

In his novel approach to examining birth control, MacNamara (history, Texas A & M Univ.) is quite successful in his attempts to bridge the gap between demographic and narrative histories of the topic. He focuses on why Americans chose to adopt methods to control fertility during the first half of the 20th century but also includes considerable information regarding the history of humans’ attempts to prevent pregnancy, dating from antiquity to the present. While not designated as such, the text falls into three parts. Chapter 1 introduces the topic, providing an overview of birth control’s early history and discussion regarding historians and gender, demographers and modernization, and the theory and methods MacNamara used in his study. Due to MacNamara’s extensive research into both primary and secondary sources, the next five chapters provide strong evidence for how modernization in American society affected men and women’s views and their access to contraceptive methods. Chapter 7 offers a conclusion and an epilogue with analysis and projections regarding global fertility and demographic trends and attitudes. The book also contains an appendix with detailed information and a bibliography that should be useful to scholars. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates and above.

January 2019 Reviews

1. Youth who trade sex in the U.S. : intersectionality, agency, and vulnerability. by Carisa R. Showden and Samantha Majic. Temple, 2018. 232p bibl index, 9781439916209 $85.72, 9781439916216 $29.95
Anyone who keeps abreast of the news is aware of the master narrative of youth sex trafficking in the US. Public facilities sometimes display warning posters featuring sad-eyed, innocent-looking young white women, and crime reporters and politicians portray the girls as the victims of violent, mostly non-white adult male pimps and traffickers. This book argues that the narrative conceals far more than it explains. Young people engaged in the sex trade include boys and transgendered individuals as well as girls. They are often selling sex as one of a number of survival strategies. They are as likely to have been introduced into the trade by peers or relatives as by professional traffickers, and they are often people of color. The authors base their conclusions on a rigorous methodological analysis and critique of 128 peer-reviewed studies, which they break into five groups based on the main interests and perspectives of the studies’ authors (abolition, homelessness, health, LGBTQ, critical trafficking). The strengths and weaknesses of each approach are detailed in what the authors call a comprehensive narrative analysis.
(CNA), which is amply supported by informative tables. This book should be required reading for all graduate students in the social and behavioral sciences. The intersectional methodological analysis is superb.

Traffic stops are the most frequent means of contact between law enforcement officers and the general public, and routine traffic stops are often used as a pretext to search vehicles for contraband such as illegal weapons or drugs. The authors, all scholars of criminal justice or government, provide a thorough examination of traffic stops that adds to the breadth of research already in existence, combining a literature review with their own groundbreaking work studying routine traffic stops in North Carolina. The authors clearly outline what differentiates racial disparities from racial profiling and provide clear examples for what constitutes biased policing and differential policing. The biggest contribution the authors make is how they examine well over a decade of traffic stops. Their study of over 20 million traffic stops provides a clear picture of policing during traffic stops in North Carolina. The book contains a complete list of references, notes for further details on claims and statements made throughout the text, and a comprehensive index, providing excellent source material for readers studying this topic in depth. This informative and well-written book will be a valued addition to many library collections, especially those supporting sociology or criminal justice programs. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels.

3. Critical theory at a crossroads: conversations on resistance in times of crisis. ed. by Stijn De Cauwer. Columbia, 2018. 216p index, 9780231186780, 9780231186797 $35.00, 9780231546836 $34.00
De Cauwer (Univ. of Leuven, Belgium) offers an assemblage of contemporary academics who are very much concerned with the current treatment of the term crisis. As the editor quite well declares, crisis is currently a main political concept and plays a decisive role in present-day modes of governance. In this volume, influential thinkers such as Antonio Negri and Angela McRobbie discuss the transversal themes that emerge through the analysis of events—such as the Arab Spring or the European refugee crisis—in which the definition of crisis and its tentative solutions are at the center of the debate. The book is a collection of interviews revolving around critical thinking, politics, and collective action conducted by a team of prominent scholars at the Univ. of Leuven. Though it is a well-grounded analysis of the contemporary conjuncture, the volume demands some familiarity with the interviewees’ work and the political events that have marked the past decade. This book is surely a good reading for graduate seminars in the humanities and social sciences. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students through faculty.

The editors write in their introduction that “research on grandparents in diverse cultures, at different stages of development, is essential both for theory construction and to inform social policy.” While sociological research on grandparents in developed and Western countries is substantive, there are fewer studies about grandparenthood in areas such as Africa. The contributors to Grandparents in Cultural Context share their scholarship from the Americas, Europe and Russia, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The text focuses more on qualitative research than quantitative data, incorporating case
studies and cultural analysis. The resulting text combines aspects from psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, gerontology, and social work. The research is significant; because the studies are not limited to grandparenthood in the US, they can inform the development of theory and social policy in a broader context. Beyond grandfathers and grandmothers, studies also touch on great-grandparents. Extensive references conclude each chapter; numerous photographs, charts, maps, and tables enhance the content. Separate author and subject indexes round out the scholarly apparatus. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students, researchers, and professionals.

Well-published scholar of sociology and gender Sally Hines (Univ. of Leeds) offers a unique introductory text to the field of gender studies and some of its central concerns. While contemporary theory might simply answer the title’s question with a succinct and resounding “yes,” the scrapbook or zine-inspired layout invites readers to explore the question through a spectrum of disciplinary approaches. The text is presented as a primer: with many eye-catching images, differing font sizes highlighting key concepts, and coverage of current media events, it is well crafted to appeal to audiences new to addressing questions of gender diversity and fluidity. While not offering a novel theoretical or empirical contribution, the text presents an overview of the way in which political theory, feminist theory, psychology, science, arts, and media have contributed to contemporary understandings of gender around the world, from ancient Greece to contemporary China. By moving across history and geography, Hines reinforces the concept that gender is always contextual. Is Gender Fluid? would be a useful conversation starter in the introductory gender studies classroom, not only for the content but in the ease of pulling out key concepts, as supported by alternating fonts and broken-up blocks of text. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and general readers.

At the outset of this book, Melzer (Albion College) asserts that so much of men’s identity as “men” is tied to their ability to perform—be it sexually, bodily, or economically. But what happens to those men who do not live up to the masculine ideal, especially because of physical, social, and structural changes beyond their control? What do men do when they fail to perform gender appropriately? To explore such questions, Melzer employed a multi-method ethnographic approach consisting of participant observation, interviews, and analysis of blogs and documents among members of a fight club, a sexual improvement club, involuntarily unemployed men, and stay-at-home dads. He identified four responses to body and breadwinning failure: men internalize their failure, attempt to repair their failure, compensate for the failure, or reject and redefine what it means to be a man. This last reaction (i.e., the possible wholesale rejection and/or redefinition of masculinity) particularly interests the author, who predicts that the pace and prospects for continued change will be fueled by such factors as increased liberalism among young people, economic stagnation, work-family legal changes, and activism among feminist change agents. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.
7. You've always been there for me: understanding the lives of grandchildren raised by grandparents
Dunifon, Rachel E. Rutgers, 2018. 229p index, 9780813584003 $99.95, 9780813583990 $27.95, 9780813584010 $27.95
Dunifon (policy analysis and management, Cornell Univ.) introduces readers to the concept of “grandfamilies”—family units in which children are primarily raised by their grandparents. The author uses data from New York families to help give readers a more nuanced understanding of these unique family structures and the support and resources that can benefit them. While grandparents raising children have a powerful familial bond as well as accumulated wisdom, they also tend to face increasing health problems and parenting challenges due to the generation gap between them and the children. Many of these families are also on fixed incomes and thus require additional financial resources to care for the children. Dunifon employs surveys, interviews, and observations to illuminate and study the realities for these grandfamilies; she also offers insightful policy recommendations for how best to promote their well-being. Geared especially toward those working in (or interested in) the social services and policy-making fields, this volume sheds light on a family unit that often goes unnoticed. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.

8. Arab family studies: critical reviews. ed. by Suad Joseph. Syracuse, 2018. 614p bibl, 9780815635598 $150.00, 9780815635581 $69.95, 9780815654247
Joseph (UC Davis) has edited a comprehensive introduction to the field of family studies across the Arab Middle East. The book is organized into four parts, three of which cover scholarship on families in three broad regions (North Africa, Eastern Arab States, and the Arab Gulf). The fourth section is devoted to thematic chapters and tackles critical issues such as migration, education, and media (among others) in relation to Arab families. These sections are preceded by an introduction in which Joseph outlines the importance of studying the family, “the most powerful social idiom throughout the Arab region” (1). She describes the volume’s endeavor to examine the centrality of the family to the Arab world while also challenging Western assumptions and theories about the family that have been transposed uncritically to other regions. The chapters undertake these tasks by surveying primarily English, Arabic, French, and German literature on Arab families from 1950s to the present, drawing on multiple disciplines, with most relevant scholarship emerging from anthropology and sociology. The volume is useful both for a general overview of Arab families and to those seeking more in-depth analyses of families in particular Arab states. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels.

89 The sociology of law and the global transformation of democracy. Thornhill, C. J. Cambridge, 2018. 587p bibl index, 9781107199903 $125.00, 9781316649060 $44.99, 9781108196444 $36.00
Thornhill (Univ. of Manchester, UK) has written several highly readable books on the sociology of law, especially on the sociology of constitutions. Here, he reexamines modern democracy's historical transformation from its revolutionary beginnings in the late 18th century to its consolidation after 1945. Thornhill rejects the metaphysical concepts of classical democratic theory that centered on the political will of the citizen as the basis for democratic organization. Taking instead a legal-sociological perspective, he argues that the rise of global democracy after 1945 resulted from the emergence of international human rights law. The author examines the relationship between international human rights and the institutionalization of democracy in six countries: the US, the Federal Republic of Germany, the UK, Columbia, Russia, and Kenya. Suitable for courses in the sociology of law,
constitutional law, international politics, and social theory. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

10. Raising global families: parenting, immigration, and class in Taiwan and the US. Lan, Pei-Chia. Stanford, 2018. 237p bib l index, 9781503602076 $85.00, 9781503605909 $24.95, 9781503605916 For most families, raising a child is a challenging undertaking. What if the child is brought up in a global setting? Are there additional challenges? If so, what are they? These are the issues dealt with in this timely book. By conducting a “multisited research,” using samples drawn in both Taiwan and the US, Lan (National Taiwan Univ.) looks into four types of families: Taiwanese middle class, Taiwanese working class, immigrant middle class, and immigrant working class. The author offers a detailed look into the real situation in child-rearing in this increasingly globalized age. She observes that parents who live, either by choice or by necessity, on the two sides of the Pacific, or “global families,” are particularly anxious. “Security,” or raising children properly for them to have a secure future in this global setting, becomes the top priority for families. Yet the effect of globalization is seen in almost all families around the world. Donald Trump’s granddaughters’ learning Mandarin is but one example. This book is a worthy study not only for “global families” but also for all families. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

11. Ending overcriminalization and mass incarceration: hope from civil society. Bradley, Anthony B. Cambridge, 2018. 223p index, 9781108427548 $120.00, 9781108446297 $34.99, 9781108581769 $28.00 Bradley (The King’s College) applies Smith’s notion of personalism to the US’s overpopulated prison system. He makes a compelling argument that mass incarceration is a “crisis of human dignity” and concludes that criminal justice reform will be unsuccessful without aid from civil society, particularly the family. Much of the book is devoted to explaining the well-understood problems of mass incarceration, including the imbalances of prosecutorial and judicial discretion and the inadequacy of public defenders, but his discussion of personalism is not well integrated into these sections. Though his suggestion that help from civil society is necessary to repair the damage wrought by over incarceration is apt, his account overlooks the significance of structural forces in explaining mass incarceration. For example, he states that the school-to-prison pipeline must be dismantled “not from the policy down but from the person up.” Although strengthening the family will undoubtedly lessen the number of juvenile offenders, ending the practice of sending students to jail for school infractions will as well. Similarly, the fact that African Americans serve as police officers and judges or support tough-on-crime policies does not negate racism’s role in mass incarceration, as described by Michelle Alexander’s The New Jim Crow (CH, Nov’10, 48-1766). Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

12. Inequalities of aging: paradoxes of independence in American home care. Buch, Elana D. New York University, 2018. 263p bibl index, 9781479810734, 9781479807178 $30.00, 9781479810147 This book is a gripping, vivid, thought-provoking ethnographic exploration of home care providers and the older adults they serve. Buch (Univ. of Iowa) is at her best when describing and illustrating the incompatibility of two equally valuable social goals: providing affordable home care to aging people who want desperately to live independently in their own communities and ensuring a sufficient standard of living and economic independence for workers (most of whom are immigrants and women of color) providing that care. This rich sociological analysis pays careful attention to broad themes of race and gender inequality and advances the novel concept of generative labor, which refers to everyday
practices through which individuals make and sustain life and at the same time generate and reproduce systematic, intersecting forms of structural inequality. Buch’s analysis is based on eight months of fieldwork in Chicago, at which time she visited the homes of older care recipients—clients of two home care agencies—when their caregivers were present. This engaging, theoretically sophisticated read will enrich courses on social inequalities, aging, labor, ethnographic methods, and gender. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

13. The Crisis of connection : roots, consequences, and solutions. ed. by Niobe Way et al. New York University, 2018. 502p index, 9781479819294 $89.00, 9781479819294 $30.00, 9781479880171 A prominent concern in contemporary society is people’s crisis of connection with themselves and others. In creating a volume examining the crisis of human connection, the editors gathered an impressive list of interdisciplinary contributors. Guided by the five-part story at the heart of the science of human connection (the human desire for connection, roots, the crisis itself, consequences, and solutions to the crisis of connection), the volume challenges the current paradigm of independence and advocates for a perspective that recognizes interdependence as the basis of human connection. Focusing on various social identities (e.g., immigrants, black girls, veterans), the volume's contributors provide multiple creative solutions for school and community—developing and nurturing empathy, working with Shakespeare in the classroom, using theatrical intervention with girls and veterans, and supporting interfaith recognition of common humanity. Written in an accessible style, the book is a must read for any scholar interested in the science of human connection. The volume is a particularly valuable tool for anyone interested in solutions to the current crisis of connection. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

14. A lover's pinch : a cultural history of sadomasochism. Tupper, Peter. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 329p bibl index, 9781538111178 $36.00, 9781538111185 $34.00 In this historical narrative of the private world of play, pleasure, and power, writer Peter Tupper seeks to answer questions of the origins of sadomasochism. A Lover’s Pinch places relationships and interactions involving corporal punishment and theatrics within the standard context of BDSM culture rooted in Freudian and Foucaultian theory. Critical to this culture was Roger Callois’s identification of ilinx, a mode of play involving the alteration of perception. A Lover’s Pinch explores spiritual practices of ancient Native Americans and Pompeiians to illustrate flagellation’s origins as an element of the marriage and fertility rite rather than as a “deviant” form of sexuality. Tupper traces the progression of sadomasochistic practices alongside religious rituals, secular voyeurism, colonialism, and the expansion of the press and the commercialization of kink. Tupper’s study is most effective in its discussion of the many ironies embedded in BDSM history, such as the Nazis who destroyed pornographic literature, only to have a large fetish base built around Nazi imagery and dominance, or of the falsehood of Victorian prudishness versus tight-lacing. A Lover’s Pinch offers essential context for students examining a comprehensive history of sexuality from a global perspective. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Advanced undergraduates and above; general readers.
December 2018 Reviews


Society in the U.S. fails to provide effective (as distinguished from fictive), equal opportunity for children of color. Dowd (Univ. of Florida Levin College of Law) focuses on mutually reinforcing and interdependent circumstances that can prevent success: racial and class discrimination, poverty, poor housing, toxic neighborhoods, substandard schools and inadequate reward for educational attainment, family dysfunction, tendency to criminalize behavior that might be dealt with leniently in wealthy or white children, low-paying jobs, limited life choices. Children of color are not alone. Dowd focuses on government’s role in creating and allowing this situation, but culture and economics also contribute. She addresses all children who perform below the potential they possess at birth, children whose life outcomes can be predicted with great accuracy because of race, poverty, gender, family, or where they live. Dowd’s goal is to create chances for achievement that advantaged children possess. Her proposals—especially those in chapter 6, “Developmental Equality,” and chapter 10, “A New Deal for Children”—which apply to all similarly situated children, are well reasoned and effectively address multiple and reinforcing problems. Dowd’s proposals are required for real equal opportunity and will lead to success, but they face enormous ideological, political, and economic obstacles. This book is required reading. Summing Up: Essential. All readers.

2. The trans generation: how trans kids (and their parents) are creating a gender revolution. Travers, Ann. New York University, 2018. 263p bibl index, 9781479885794 $25.00, 9781479879939

Whether due to a general lack of understanding or consistent misinterpretations of definitions, gender and identity can be challenging topics for many individuals. Travers (Simon Fraser Univ.) helps combat this confusion by exploring aspects of gender and identity research that are often perplexing for students. Travers presents an innovative exploration of the experiences of transgender children, offering concrete definitions of terminology and fresh approaches to discussing gender, sex, and identity. To some, these definitions and explanations might seem inconsequential, but they can be invaluable to those less informed about gender research. The text goes beyond simply discussing issues related to gender and children by listing resources for children, parents, lawmakers, and educators as well as providing policy recommendations for healthcare and education professionals. The book contains a complete list of references and notes for further details on claims and statements made throughout the text. Also included are a glossary, comprehensive index, and multiple appendixes that provide excellent source material for research on gender. This illuminating text will be an appreciated addition to any library collection, especially those supporting sociology, psychology, gender studies, or criminology and criminal justice programs. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers.

3. The new black middle class in the twenty-first century. Landry, Bart. Rutgers, 2018. 230p index, 9780813593975 $99.95, 9780813593968 $28.95, 9780813593982 $28.95

Landry’s updated work is a mixed-methods study designed to better understand the black middle class in the 21st century as members experience simultaneous prosperity and precarity. To reflect shifts among the black middle class since this important book’s initial 1987 publication (CH, Oct’87, 86–24975), Landry (emer., Univ. of Maryland) uses census data and interviews with 31 residents of Prince George’s County, a suburb of Washington, DC. In its emphasis of class diversity within black communities, Landry’s work here falls within a lineage that begins with W. E. B. Du Bois’s Philadelphia Negro (1899).
and continues through the studies that followed in its wake. A particular strength is Landry’s description of distinctions between the black and white middle classes. His data show that neighborhood amenities, intergenerational wealth transfers, and returns on educational investments are harder to attain and maintain for blacks. Though an extensive analysis of the impacts of declines in public-sector employment and property values since the Great Recession for the black middle class is curiously absent, given the overrepresentation of black employment in this sector and the book’s focus on Prince George’s County (an area still struggling to recover from the housing market crisis), Landry’s book remains a valuable contribution. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels.

4. Trans kids : being gendered in the twenty-first century. Meadow, Tey. California, 2018. 300p bibl index, 9780520275034 $85.00, 9780520275041 $29.95, 9780520964167 $29.95
Meadows (sociology, Harvard Univ.) offers a terrific, timely book about children, parents, and their ties to, and struggles with, the concept of gender. Informed by ethnography, ethnomethodology, interviews, and participant observation, Meadows portrays gender as an interactional achievement and as an identity rooted in relationships as well as one constituted by paradox as it necessitates constant negotiation while being perceived as an “enduring feature” of self (p. 52). Specifically, Meadows shows how the bodies of trans and gender nonconforming youth serve as sites of contestation; the ways these youth manage appearance, stigma, disclosure, and the persistent scrutiny of others; and how these youth live with limited agency, unable to offer consent in formative contexts (e.g., familial, educational, medical). Meadows tells the stories of parents too: trying to determine whether a child’s gendered transgression is an “isolated incident” or something more; dealing with hostile responses from their communities; serving, often unwittingly, as transgender advocates and activists; and fearing mistakes with accommodating a child’s needs and desires. Meadows is a superb scholar and storyteller and, with this work, makes a critical contribution to family and gender studies. Everyone should read this book. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.

5. Communities and crime : an enduring American challenge. by Pamela Wilcox, Francis T. Cullen, and Ben Feldmeyer. Temple, 2017. 261p bibl index, 9781592139736 $99.50, 9781592139743 $29.95, 9781592139750 $29.95
Wilcox, Cullen, and Feldmeyer (all, criminal justice, Univ. of Cincinnati) provide an intellectual history of communities and crime in the US. They look at seven perceptions of the inner-city community—community as socially disorganized, as system, as truly disadvantaged, as criminal culture, as broken window, as criminal opportunity, and as collective efficacy—devoting a chapter to each. The authors emphasize the macro context, i.e., the idea that though particular images of community convey static differences, inner-city criminalistic communities are not islands but have distinct ongoing linkages with surrounding communities and neighborhoods and with the larger region of the city. In the last chapter, the authors discuss various misunderstandings about communities and crime: the failure to take into account, as David Weisburd wrote in "The Law of Crime Concentration and the Criminology of Place" (published in Criminology, 2015), that “about 50 percent of crime is found at just 5 to 6 percent of street segments”; the assumption that crime rates in inner-city neighborhoods will always be high; and the erroneous assumption that the major cause of inner-city crime in black communities is a function of the fact that the population is black. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.
6. **Being Muslim : a cultural history of women of color in American Islam. Chan-Malik, Sylvia.** New York University, 2018. 275p bibl index, 9781479850600 $89.00, 9781479823420 $29.00, 9781479881550

This is a compelling, comprehensive, well-researched yet intimate exploration of intersectionality in the lives of African American Muslim women. Readers make an excursion through lives and contexts, from the beginning of the 20th century into the 21st. Chan-Malik (American studies, women and gender studies, Rutgers Univ.) demonstrates skills beyond the ordinary as she leaves little to the imagination regarding women's reasons for choosing Islam as a faith center and its relationship to homemaking, careers, and husbands. These areas are contextualized with the background of stereotypes of black women and men. Chan-Malik brings back to life the little-known biography of Dakota Staton and the sometimes misinterpreted life of Betty Shabazz as well as the first African American Muslim women of the Ahmadiyya Mission. It is clear that Chan-Malik consulted every form of literature available on women engaging Islam. She challenges pervasive notions about who is Muslim and who is not and the wearing of a veil; she also gives readers a glimpse into how black life disrupts prevailing notions of race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Chan-Malik has interrupted the stream of community biographies told through a male lens. An important book. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.

7. **Researching sex and sexualities. ed. by Charlotte Morris et al.** Zed Books, 2018. 375p bibl index, 9781786993205 $95.00, 9781786993199 $29.95, 9781786993229

Sex and sexuality are topics that provoke both interest and censure. This book collects writings that address some areas of sex and sexuality society has seen as difficult to investigate. Since the 18 contributors hail from different parts of the world, the book is cross-cultural and presents viewpoints both diverse and compelling. For example, in his thought-provoking essay "Dirty Talk," P. J. Macleod suggests using poetic form when researching pornography. Andrea Cornwall, an editor as well as a contributor, offers a fascinating anthropological study of Indian sex workers. Cornwall is careful to present the hidden details of the lives of the women engaged in such work. As she writes: “Less often do we see sex workers represented as people with complex lives involving a diversity of other people, including those they love as well as those who make their lives difficult.” And contributor Katherine Radoslovich tackles the idea of conducting research in a residential aged-care center. Though in some circles this notion might be considered taboo, Radoslovich does a splendid job of balancing sensitivity and clinical objectivity. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

8. **Homeward : life in the year after prison. Western, Bruce.** Russell Sage Foundation, 2018. 216p bibl index, 9780871549556 $29.95, 9781610448710

After spending months, years, or decades incarcerated, well over a half-million persons return to their communities each year. What transpires is significant because it reflects the utility of imprisonment: how ex-offenders thrive or fail on reentry. Eight previous vetted studies examined this population with different sample sizes, follow-up times, and numbers of participants retained at the end of the research period. This ninth undertaking, the Boston Reentry Study (BRS), draws from the strengths of earlier research and provides the best analysis to date of the reentry experience. Western, a Harvard sociologist, is an eminent researcher on mass incarceration. Furthermore, he writes with grace and simplicity, making his narrative understandable and persuasive to any college-educated reader interested in criminal justice. The BRS begins with 122 participants who were first interviewed in prison a month prior to their release and follows 91 percent for at least one year. This hugely important study reflects how the poverty-addiction-family dysfunction nexus often leads to incarceration, making
successful reentry a challenge. Prison administrators and legislators should be asking themselves why their penal institutions can't be smarter. Western’s account ends with research-based recommendations for public policies. Summing Up: Essential for criminal justice collections. Most levels/libraries.

9. Advice for future corpses*: *and those who love them : a practical perspective on death and dying.
Tisdale initially may seem to take a sardonic stance to her subject, but she could not be more earnest and authentic in adopting a compassionate understanding of death and dying. She draws from her rich array of familial care-giving experiences, from working as a nurse for more than three decades to working in a palliative care program serving the seriously ill. Being an accomplished author helped her create this well-written, unflinchingly honest work, making for a compelling read. Each chapter looks at another aspect of how people see death and dying, occurring in themselves and among their loved ones. Readers learn, for example, that remaining silent in the company of a dying loved one may offer better support than protestations claiming how diminished life will be without the dying person. This book is packed with a great wealth of useful information on how people die and the need to compassionately support the dying during their final days. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readership levels.

Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 181p bibl index, 9781538114032 $80.00, 9781538114049 $27.00, 9781538114056 $25.50
In Hegemonic Masculinity, Messerschmidt (sociology and criminology, Univ. of Southern Maine) traces the historical formulation, reformulation, and numerous unique applications of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. For over three decades, this ubiquitous concept has been influential in the scholarly examination of masculinity and gender studies—albeit with varying degrees of understanding (let alone consensus) of its meaning. The author sets out to provide extensive, meticulously researched historical context of its development as a concept, noting all the critiques, reformulations, and changes along the way. He pays particular attention to local, regional, and global applications of this concept and to how variations in culture have contributed to its evolution and ultimate complexity. The highly readable result is part conceptual archaeology and part comprehensive literature review; young scholars embarking on careers in the fields of men’s studies (specifically) or gender studies (in general) will find much to ponder here in the first semester of graduate school. More-seasoned gender researchers will benefit as well: the book is a masterful compendium of historical and contemporary scholarship. In sum, this is an indispensable resource for those actively engaged in the study of gender and masculinity. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students and above.

11. Mothers of the military : support and politics during wartime. Christensen, Wendy M.
Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 213p bibl index, 9781538114230 $34.00, 9781538114247 $32.00
Christiansen (William Paterson) studied the mothers of active military men (and a few women) and has interviews and electronic bulletin board traffic from the end of George W. Bush’s Gulf War. Her findings generalize to most of the post-Vietnam, all-volunteer-force era, when only a small percentage of young people served in the military. Mothers, unlike spouses, do not typically live in military communities, so their isolation and need for solidarity is greater. Many soldiers now are single and young, moving directly from their parents’ homes to the service. As a result, they are more dependent on parents, especially if they come home injured, when the care of their mothers is vital for recovery. Christensen’s strongest point is how military moms suppress political criticism of war to preserve solidarity with one
another. There is a good chapter about how the military targets poor black single mothers to sell them on the idea that the service can be a father figure for their children. There is surprisingly little about female soldiers or Hispanic soldiers since both groups are a growing part of the US military. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.


In this history of the collaboration between social scientists in Mexico and the US, Rosemblatt (history, Univ. of Maryland) deftly explores the intricate connections between social science research, eugenics, changing racial concepts, and government policies toward indigenous peoples. Perhaps the author’s greatest achievement is in tracing the coevolution of eugenic thought in Mexico and the US during the first half of the 20th century, making the case that this was a pan-American phenomenon. As the 20th century unfolded, Mexican and US scholars attempted to consider their countries according to categories of race. Rosemblatt examines some of the underlying assumptions of Mexican and US social scientists and charts the ways they developed academic networks (journals, conferences, and so on) to facilitate their study of ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples. Chapter 3 provides a thoughtful examination of the US Indian Service under John Collier, who, as head, adopted Mexican social policies as his "model." Collier later used these policies as a model for the internment of Japanese-Americans. Rosemblatt correctly observes that Mexican experts did not (and do not) always accept US policy prescriptions, and vice versa. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students, researchers, and professionals.

November 2018


Mallach (Center for Community Progress, Washington, DC) provides an important exploration of contemporary urban development in the US. The author's focus is on what he terms "legacy" cities—older industrial cities such as St. Louis; Detroit; Baltimore; Flint, Michigan; and Youngstown, Ohio; Mallach carefully investigates the trends these cities have undergone since the turn of the millennium. Many cities have experienced a renaissance as gentrifying neighborhoods attract millennials seeking city living. At the same time, income polarization and racial segregation have increased in most cities; the vast majority of neighborhoods have not benefited from recent revitalization. Mallach also addresses in some depth the problems many older industrial cities still suffer—many have not profited from the downtown improvements or university district development cities such as Detroit and Philadelphia enjoy. After identifying and discussing such trends in some detail, Mallach outlines a series of local policies and programs that might help improve economic outcomes and reduce social polarization in America's industrial cities. This accessible and compelling work will likely be of strongest interest to scholars of urban studies, urban planning, and urban sociology. Summing Up: Recommended. Undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

Minian (history and comparative studies in race and ethnicity, Stanford) contextualizes the post-Bracero (manual worker) Program period of Mexican migration and immigration between 1965 and 1986. She focuses on migration patterns to and from Mexico's Michoacán and Zacatecas regions and Los Angeles. Over 250 oral histories bring a new historical perspective to the Mexican immigration and migration process. Individual chapters contextualize the historical construction of modern Mexican migration and immigration, cross-cultural tensions among Mexican Americans, the sexuality and gender identity of male migrants, and the rise of contemporary anti-immigrant policies in the US. Minian challenges similar published scholarship that centers on the Mexican migration and immigration experience in the US: she is influenced instead by a body of recent Latinx migrant/immigrant scholarship that introduces transnational and cross-cultural perspectives to the existing literature on this critical subject matter. Her research yields insights into the social and ideological impacts that past Mexican migrants and immigrants have had on the current struggle for immigrants’ rights in the US. This is also the first scholarship that investigates the sexuality and gender identity of Mexican migrant and immigrant males on both sides of the US border. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readership levels/libraries.

3. **The chosen ones : black men and the politics of redemption , Gender and justice, 6.** Jones, Nikki. California, 2018. 226p bibl index, 9780520288348 $85.00, 9780520288355 $29.95, 9780520963313 $29.95

Although many aspects of the black experience have been documented, normally focusing on issues such as racism, discrimination, mass incarceration, executions, police shootings, police surveillance, or the school-to-prison pipeline, much less attention has been paid to the ways inner-city violence and police violence intertwine. In the face of continued efforts to reduce inner-city violence, socially, politically, and ideologically constructed devastation continues to target young black men. In an urgent need to further analyze the social organization of efforts to reduce inner-city violence, Jones (UC Berkeley) provides a powerful reexamination of the social organization of such efforts and masterfully documents the historical, institutional, political, ideological, and economic forces driving the continued battles of manipulation, exclusion, and oppression that erupt into violence. A classic ethnographic account, the author takes readers into the field with sociological lenses, exposing how institutional and interpersonal battles reinforce the social organization and objectives of crime-fighting efforts, which in turn shape the trajectories of black men. The book is vital in the areas of sociology, African American studies, minority studies, and criminal justice. The Chosen Ones is a must-read for all people vested in better understanding police and inner-city violence, transformation, and redemption. Summing Up: Essential. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty.


Although they happen more frequently than in many other societies, even in the US school shootings are rare. But their dramatic nature makes them key moments around which activists rally for greater gun control. Sociologist Kerr (an independent researcher in the UK) examines policy responses to school shootings in the US and attempts to explain why, in comparison to the handgun ban in the UK after the Dunblane school shooting in 1996, little gun control has been enacted since these shootings took place. The book centers on case studies of three of the deadliest and most high profile school shootings in US
history: Columbine (1999), Virginia Tech (2007), and Sandy Hook (2012). Kerr focuses on the political framing of these events by gun control activists to explain the ways in which the activists succeeded in achieving various objectives (closing the “gun show loophole” in Colorado after Columbine) or failed (no assault weapon ban after Sandy Hook) in each case. The text is fairly readable, but there are few surprises for experts here. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

5. The cost of being a girl: working teens and the origins of the gender wage gap. Besen-Cassino, Yasemin. Temple, 2018. 194p bibl index, 9781439913482 $94.50, 9781439913499 $27.95, 9781439913505 $27.95.
Besen-Cassino (Montclair State) looks at the gender pay gap she believes begins in early employment experiences even if the jobs are in the informal sector. The book starts with a survey of the literature of labor economics on the topic, which the author says is primarily on the adult labor force and thus ignores the influence of early work experiences. She uses qualitative and quantitative methods to explore work experiences of young male and female workers. Most of the emphasis is on female workers, who often work as babysitters and shop girls. Personal narratives illustrate points Besen-Cassino wishes to make. Information based on statistics and statistical analysis are interspersed throughout the book. Though it offers insight into early work experiences and how they might affect adult employment, the book covers many different topics, such as body image, that are not central to the topic. The book is repetitive and extensively footnoted by parentheses in the text, which makes reading more difficult. The appendix gives methodological notes, and there are references and an index. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty.

People of color in Chicago’s deeply segregated Austin neighborhood are subject to horrific rates of crime, violence, and trauma. They are also subject to rampant police abuse and one of the highest incarceration rates in the world. Through extensive research and personal stories, the authors show how these two issues become entwined in a neo-liberal city that focuses all of its positive attention on building a world-class downtown and leaves impoverished neighborhoods, like Austin, decimated. For 40 years, the municipal government has tried to maintain peace and safety by investing in police power while simultaneously disinvesting from jobs programs, mental and physical health clinics, and schools. This "war on neighborhoods" leaves impoverished communities vulnerable to crime—which, in turn, creates the erroneous impression that only criminals live there and that investing in community development is pointless. Building on the work of Michelle Alexander, the authors call for a move toward interconnectedness and community resources and away from individual blame, discrimination by police and prosecutors, and mass incarceration. The consequences of living in a police state extend far beyond Austin, and this book needs to be widely read. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers.

7. Liberia, South Carolina: an African American Appalachian community. Coggeshall, John M. North Carolina, 2018. 269p bibl index, 9781469640853 $90.00, 9781469640853 $29.95, 9781469640860 $22.99
Coggeshall, an anthropologist at Clemson University, presents an ethnographic history of an African American community that was established on land deeded to emancipated slaves after the Civil War.
Based on narratives of the Owens family and their neighbors and friends as well as historians’ research of the local community, the book chronicles the more than 150-year history of pervasive racial divides in Liberia and its surroundings. The community’s experience of the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Jim Crow era, and desegregation represents a microcosm of African Americans’ experiences more broadly in the American South. In a century and a half, the Liberia community has maintained ownership and occupancy of the land through embedded and embodied family memories, anthropomorphic landscapes, and inheritance of African American traditions. Despite myriad hardships and struggles, the Liberia community persists, telling a great story of the cultural meaning of land. This case study of an African American community is a balanced presentation of family narratives, historians’ research, and anthropological insights. It is a must-have book for collections in African American studies, anthropology, sociology, and other social sciences. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers.


Policing is a well-studied area of interest for social scientists. However, there remain important aspects of the occupational experiences of police officers that deserve investigation. The experiences of those policing, for example, are studied relatively rarely, as most criminological research focuses on officers' experiences with the public. Retired police officer Panter (Liverpool John Moores Univ., UK) breaks from that trend and presents the first investigation into the experiences of transgender police. Panter examines the attitudes of cisgender police officers towards transgender officers, the experiences of police officers who identify as transgender, and the broader consequences of these attitudes and experiences. This first-of-its-kind research combines empirical, qualitative evidence with incisive theory and policy implications; the author presents valuable directions for future research. Each chapter contains a complete list of references and notes for further details on claims and statements made throughout the text. The book also contains a comprehensive index that provides excellent source material for research on policing and gender. This illuminating text will be an appreciated addition to any library collection, especially those supporting sociology, psychology, gender studies, or criminology and criminal justice programs. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

9. America’s changing icons: constructing patriotic women from World War I to the present. Babic, Annessa Ann. Fairleigh Dickinson, 2018. 201p bibl index, 9781683931348 $90.00, 9781683931355 $85.50

Babic treats the development of the patriotic feminine, always white, from the goddess-like Columbia to the war-supporting Rosie the Riveter through the many transformations of Wonder Woman. A reworking of Babic’s dissertation, the book examines these figures through the lenses of contemporaneous advertisements in popular magazines, posters, editorials, and journalism. Babic begins with the iconic Columbia, the self-sacrificing "American girl" on a pedestal, and goes on to consider Rosie the Riveter as a patriot who labors for herself and her country. Even Wonder Woman, introduced in 1941, has numerous identities that fit the times. No single image of the patriotic feminine ideal emerged after WW II—the US became more multifaceted and conflicted in its views about women and their roles in family, work, politics, society, and war. Babic discusses women’s liberation, the unsuccessful campaign for the ERA, and even the Gulf War, ending with a postscript on the film Wonder Woman (2017). Scholarly notes appear at the end of each chapter, but the book includes only a handful
of visual images and would have benefited from more. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduates
students, researchers, faculty.

10. Mediocracy: the politics of the extreme centre. Deneault, Alain. tr. by Catherine Browne. Between
the Lines, 2018. 189p, 9781771133432 $22.95, 9781771133449
Browne’s translation of Deneault’s work differs from the original French edition (2016) in that some
sections were removed and others rewritten to focus on issues relevant to an English-language
audience. Noted by Browne as belonging to the literary category of essai, the lively, highly critical, and
somewhat controversial work was written to provoke philosophical discourse on an abstract idea—
mediocracy. Deneault (sociology, Univ. of Québec, Montreal) weighs in on the ever-increasing social
pressure to repress creativity, passion, and good ideas and conform to the lowest common
denominator, thus creating a cultural landscape in which “average” is the pinnacle of success. In a
society where success is defined by those who lack individuality, imagination, critical thinking skills, and
exceptional intelligence, what does the future hold? Deneault posits that those with average levels of
competence rise to power and define success for every facet of contemporary society—from finance to
education to the arts in terms of commercial viability—creating a culture of mediocrity with no place for
the intelligent, creative, thought-provoking, or non-commercialist. A thoughtful narrative on the
vagaries of a society enthralled with conformity and economic viability, Deneault’s book has broad
cross-disciplinary interest. Endnotes, not in the French edition, are provided. Summing Up: Highly
recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.

119p bibl, 9781544324715 $15.00, 9781544324692
As the title indicates, Bird’s Sage Guide to Social Work Careers: Your Journey to Advocacy provides
descriptive career advice, resources, and firsthand accounts from professionals in social work—with an
emphasis on advocacy. This very accessible text, erring on the side of brevity, is grouped into sections
exploring topics such as poverty, child welfare, disability, substance abuse, aging, and so on. Each
chapter includes personal stories from individuals in the field, job descriptions, policy examples, and
additional references. The job description portion of each chapter also includes links to job websites,
professional associations, and government documentation and data. Bird (Portland State Univ.) writes in
a style that is both personable and rich in useful information. Readers will enjoy the storytelling from
various individual social work professionals sharing their career journeys while absorbing information
about job descriptions, salary ranges, and qualifications various career paths require. This book will
make an excellent companion for anyone with a passion for advocacy and an interest in pursuing social
work as a profession. Summing Up: Recommended. Undergraduate collections.

2018. 192p bibl index, 9780190608774 $39.95, 9780190608781
Sociologist Marcelo Bergman, professor and founding director of the Center for Latin American Studies
on Insecurity and Violence at the National University of Tres de Febrero in Argentina, tackles a
monumental assignment in this rather ambitious project. Making critical contributions to sociology and
criminology, among other fields, the author convincingly argues that criminality in Latin America
continues to rise as it has become a lucrative endeavor for many Latin Americans, including
entrepreneurs and public officials. Bergman’s data collection includes inmate surveys, victim surveys,
and penal judicial files. Bergman and his research team conducted face-to-face interviews but only in
Mexico, Peru, El Salvador, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. Hence, the greatest shortcoming of this book is that it covers a large region as opposed to any one individual country and, consequently, more attention is given to the larger South American countries and Mexico. A second area that this monograph overlooks is the role of the US in contributing to Latin America's status as the most crime-ridden region in the world. Nonetheless, this work makes several interventions and provides useful data, such as a toolkit of concepts. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

The rich Russians who became well-known vulgar parvenus after the Soviet Union fell have been succeeded by a somewhat more modest-acting, and politically subordinate, group of oligarchs. Schimpfössl interviewed 80 rich Russians, in Russia and in the West, focusing on how they are adapting their lifestyle. The first wave of “new Russians” made their money by ruthlessly capitalizing on their connections in order to privatize state assets. They flaunted their wealth and claimed pre-Soviet aristocratic ancestry. With Putin’s accession, the oligarchs were reined in. Now, with a “new modesty” of self-presentation, they are trying to legitimize their wealth and power by promoting their roots in the Soviet intelligentsia. Their background in technical fields seems a more legitimate source of wealth. Their new philanthropic efforts to promote Russian art and culture seem a more legitimate claim by this small elite to benefit the masses. Schimpfössl roots her analysis in the sociological studies of power elites by Veblen, Weber, Mills, Domhoff, and, especially, Bourdieu. She treats this project of turning the gigantically unequal wealth of this instant elite into a respectable dominant class as a process of becoming bourgeois. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

Flores (history, Case Western Univ.) examines the historical transnational Mexican migration and immigration to Chicago that took place from the Mexican Revolution era to the beginning of the Cold War. He conducted primary research in the US and Mexico to bring a fresh historical assessment to the Mexican immigration and migration experience in the first half of the 20th century. His discussion emphasizes, for example, the political and social understandings of the various Mexican migrants and immigrants that came to Chicago in the 1920s. Individual chapters contextualize early modern Mexican migration and immigration, concurrent cross-cultural tensions, and the increase of anti-Mexican immigration policies. Flores' scholarship stands apart from literature that focuses on the Mexican Revolution period by including a historical analysis of the revolutionary process in the US. The Mexican Revolution in Chicago continues the recent publication of literature interrogating the Mexican and Latinx cultural and social experience in Chicago and the rest of the American Midwest. Summing Up: Recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty and professionals.
1. **Machines of youth: America's car obsession.** Cross, Gary S. Chicago, 2018. 227p index, 9780226341644 $97.50, 9780226551135 $32.50, 9780226341781

Cars have played an important role in the lives of Americans since the birth of mass-produced cars. For teenagers, cars have signaled the departure from childhood—picking up a date, cruising with a group of friends. Cars became a rite of passage. But the freedom and privacy that their cars afforded also raised parental and social concerns—street racing, sexual advances, and other unacceptable behaviors raised moral panics. Cross’s major focus is mid-century youth who could afford cars—he rarely discusses what happened to youth without cars—and he does not slight girls, accurately showcasing them for taking active parts in cruising and car clubs in what continues to be considered a male culture. Cross (history, Penn State) concludes by speculating that cars no longer mean freedom to youth today because, as he writes in chapter 9 (“The End of Youth Car Culture?”), “adults today are decidedly less tolerant of teen autonomy, self-expression, and rebellion through automobility.” Simultaneously, he identifies the lasting popularity of nostalgic car show events and parades. Though transition into adulthood is no longer defined by car ownership, in the mid-20th century the car was a marker for many teens, and Cross does a good job of dissecting that connection. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.

2. **No longer homeless: how the ex-homeless get and stay off the streets.** by David Wagner with Gemma Atticks. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 183p bibl index, 9781538110072 $36.00, 9781538110089 $34.00

Wagner (emer., sociology and social work, Univ. of Southern Maine) interviewed 51 formerly homeless individuals in California, New England, and Washington, DC, to understand the factors that helped them transition out of homelessness. The most salient reason was that they were able to enter some form of subsidized housing, enabling them to pay rent equivalent to about 30 percent of their income. Wagner challenges the conventional conceptions of homelessness, noting that it is most often episodic and closely related to income (from work and/or governmental assistance), access to the support of family and friends, and housing affordability. Wagner also challenges the current discourse linking homelessness largely to mental health and addiction problems, contending that one can access counseling and recovery services relatively easily but that affordable housing is much more elusive. This book’s main strengths are its history of homelessness and housing in the US. Its approach is more focused on finding insights than on offering readers a road map to specific services for helping individuals get off (and stay off) the streets. Wagner’s use of the term subjects to refer to the formerly homeless individuals he interacts with belies the humanism of the rest of the book. Summing Up: Recommended. All readers.

3. **LGBTQ social movements.** Stulberg, Lisa M. Polity, 2018. 228p bibl index, 9780745656076 $64.95, 9780745656083 $22.95, 9781509527403 $22.95

This impressive book will be an invaluable resource for anyone looking for a concise, efficient, all-inclusive look at LGBTQ social movements and their history. Stulberg (sociology of education, NYU) weaves together social movement theory and history to impress on readers the complexity of the movement and the many forms that have characterized it over the last 70 years. The book is organized chronologically and around themes such as assimilationism/liberationism, use of art and popular culture, and interconnectedness of movements. The author points out that LGBTQ social activism, like
other great movements of the mid- to late-20th century, is about a marginalized group and its relationships with its country and institutions. As for the movement’s future, Stulberg argues that “in the current educational, technological, and pop culture moment—LGBTQ social change occurs in and through culture, sometimes with the backing of law and policy, and sometimes outside of it.” Stonewall and other moments in the struggle exemplify youth’s crucial role. Not surprisingly, Stulberg suggests that schools and media are at the forefront of LGBTQ social change. Stulberg’s book and references provide a portal into further study. Other relevant resources include George Chauncey's Gay New York (CH, Nov’94, 32-1725) and Why Marriage? (2004) and Lillian Faderman's The Gay Revolution (CH, Feb’16, 53-2763). Summing Up: Recommended. All readers.


Risman (Univ. of Illinois at Chicago) led a team that interviewed 116 college students who came of age after 2000 (the generation known as Millennials). The ambitious goal was to map these emerging adults’ experiences and attitudes about the extent, sources, and salience of gender differences and inequality. Risman devotes a chapter to each of the four clusters of respondents’ ideas the researchers identified: true believers, innovators, rebels, and straddlers. The empirical materials are fascinating, and Risman’s exposition — presenting individual portraits and exploring puzzles and variations within and across types — is insightful, organized, and accessible. Risman doesn’t stop at excerpting fascinating interviews with diverse young adults. She has thoroughly re-thought her multi-level theory of gender as a social structure. The revised conceptual apparatus enriches the data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The new evidence in turn bolsters Risman’s theory of how interactions, cultural beliefs, expectations, and organizational rules and practices produce, position, and police women and men as essentially different and unequal. Even better, her findings about Millennials inform Risman’s assessment of crisis tendencies and her vision of strategies to demolish gender. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

5. Fortress America: how we embraced fear and abandoned democracy. **May, Elaine Tyler.** Basic Books, 2017. 247p index, 9780465055920 $30.00, 9780465093007

In places Fortress America reads like a dystopian novel. According to May (American studies and history, Univ. of Minnesota), many Americans—in their quest to feel secure from external and internal threats to their families—have unwittingly abandoned democratic values. From the late 1940s to the present, politicians have exaggerated and manipulated the fears of voters, and this has led at times to bad public policy, further eroding the faith and confidence Americans have placed in the democratic traditions that have defined the nation. Fear of nuclear attacks from the Soviets eventually gave way to fears about urban race riots spreading to predominantly white suburbs. More affluent Americans adopted a bunker mentality, fleeing the suburbs to even more insulated gated communities. May argues that many of the hallmarks of the US’s current, hyper-partisan climate—growing distrust of government, unresolved racial and ethnic tensions, concerns about immigration, and questions about changing gender roles that have impacted the family and workplace—can be traced to the early days of the Cold War Era. When political and presidential scholars begin to unpack the results of the tumultuous election of 2016, they would do well to consult this book. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.
6. Fathering from the margins: an intimate examination of black fatherhood. Abdill, Aasha M. Columbia, 2018. 259p bibl index, 9780231180023 $60.00, 9780231542272 $59.99
In this admittedly “me-search” social science study (the researcher shares a background with those she studies or has personal experience with the topic), Abdill employs a variety of methodological approaches to examine the potential social and structural constraints and barriers poor black men in urban settings face as they attempt to support their children and be involved in their lives. In her nearly four-year case study of the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York, the author utilizes methods such as ethnographic participant observation of 10 fathers, in-depth interviews with 7 fathers, and short interviews with 34 fathers (as well as interviews and surveys of teachers, employees, and escorts of children at a childcare center) to more fully understand how these men “do fathering” (the extent and nature of their presence and engagement with their children). Abdill explores how factors at the micro and macro levels, especially the women in the families and in the larger community, influence such involvement. Overall, this is a fresh contribution to the areas of fatherhood/men’s studies (specifically) and racial/ethnic studies (in general). Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students through faculty.

7. America classifies the immigrants: from Ellis Island to the 2020 census. Perlmann, Joel. Harvard, 2018. 451p bibl index, 9780674425057 $45.00, 9780674986183 Perlmann (economics, Bard College) provides an insightful examination of how the US adopted and revised categories of immigrants over almost 150 years. The first part of this book offers a thorough discussion of legislative and bureaucratic attempts to develop practical categories. In the rest of the book Perlmann discusses how intellectual debate about categorization informed public policy. The implementation of increasingly restrictive laws in the late 19th century necessitated definitions for counting immigrants before, during, and after arrival. Accordingly, both census and immigration officials struggled to develop policies to determine appropriate classifications for the diverse, ever-changing groups. Recognizing the implications of their work, these largely nameless men helped determine categories affecting millions of immigrants. They examined many intellectual sources and dealt with practical considerations in categories of national origin, religion, and racial characteristics. Much of their work was done in the years before the decisive National Origins Act of 1924, but the effects of their work lingered over the next 100 years as changing circumstances shifted terminology and categories. Perlmann’s book is well researched and lucidly presented, although it may challenge those unfamiliar with overall immigration history. An invaluable resource for scholars of immigration and fields of social science dealing with population categorization. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

In 2012, a federal district court found that the Fire Department of the City of New York had intentionally maintained racially discriminatory hiring practices throughout its history. This deeply researched, engaging volume relates the 150-year history of racism in the FDNY—and in the firefighters’ union and among rank-and-file white firefighters—alongside a close study of the ever-evolving struggles of black firefighters for highly coveted public jobs. Goldberg’s account exemplifies the best of the studies of the long black freedom struggle, sensitive to both the continuities and contingencies of this history. Goldberg (African American studies, Wayne State Univ.) is especially attuned to the periodic rise of black militancy against entrenched race and gender exclusion, often hidden behind fragile procedural reform;
limited hiring of black personnel; and lip service to racial liberalism. Tellingly, the 2012 court victory grew out of black firefighters’ frustration with the “color-blind” racism of the FDNY in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. This passionate text will teach scholars and students more than they knew they wanted to know about the long struggle for justice in firefighting, even as Goldberg cuts to the heart of the challenges facing the post–post-racial US. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.


This is an examination of the evolution of concern about aging populations worldwide and the development of national policies for resource allocation to meet the needs of aging populations. Sivaramakrishnan (sociomedical sciences, Columbia Univ.) describes the increased vulnerability of elders as industrialization and urbanization serve national economic development goals. She clearly describes variability in the development of social policy relating to aging in Western versus developing countries. She highlights the gradual emergence of social gerontology as an interdisciplinary field focused on ensuring productivity and independence among elders, and she addresses the importance of governmental and non-governmental entities in meeting the needs of the aging population. Though the historical perspective Sivaramakrishnan offers is useful, the long and complex sentence structure that characterizes the author’s writing style will challenge many readers. In addition, the many initialisms that appear throughout the text are distracting; fortunately, a list of abbreviations is provided after the final chapter. The text is well referenced with 75 pages of notes. An important resource for those interested in gerontology and/or the development of social policy. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

10. Gender roles in American life : a documentary history of political, social, and economic changes. ed. by Constance L. Shehan. ABC-CLIO, 2018. 2v index, 9781440859588 $198.00, 9781440859595

The two-volume documentary history Shehan (Univ. of Florida) assembled examines the influence of religion, policy, and technological and economic developments on the social construction of gender roles in the US from 1775 to the present. Organized chronologically, excerpts encompass perspectives from women activists, political and religious leaders, industrialists, authors, journalists, and other notable figures. Each chapter begins with an overview of key events that shaped gender roles in the period. Brief biographical sketches of their authors preface document excerpts; references conclude each chapter. Volume 1 offers a balance of gendered perspectives on issues ranging from women’s suffrage to the division of labor. For example, Susan B. Anthony counters Alexander Graham Bell’s essay on women’s "extremism" in 1875 with her 1877 speech, "Homes of Single Women"; Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s 1898 study decrying women’s economic dependence on men is juxtaposed with Theodore Roosevelt’s 1901 speech extolling "American manhood." Volume 2 focuses on challenges to traditional gender boundaries and includes the writings of Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Phyllis Schlafly. The volume ends with an array of writings illuminating gender dynamics in the context of the rise of social and political activism in the early 21st century. This skillfully curated work will engage and foster thoughtful discussion among students of historical, cultural, and gender studies. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Undergraduates.
11. Drift: illicit mobility and uncertain knowledge. Ferrell, Jeff. California, 2018. 267p bibl index, 9780520295544 $85.00, 9780520295551 $29.95, 9780520968271 Appropriately, Drift drifts: a challenging exposition of geographic wanderings of hobos and "gutter punks," it is loosely organized albeit sharp and engaging. In the introduction Ferrell (Texas Christian Univ.) asks many intriguing questions to open the reader’s mind. The nine chapters are divided into three parts. Part 1, "Illicit Mobility," is an overview of drift, focusing on refugees and those displaced by economic circumstances, both successes and failures. The resulting homelessness and drift/vagrancy tend to be criminalized, thus producing more drift. Part 2, "American Drift," is the author’s admittedly and necessarily incomplete history of hobos and other drifters of the 20th century. As with his books on graffiti (Crimes of Style, CH, Sep'93, 31-0616) and dumpster diving (Empire of Scrounge, 2005), Ferrell uses participant observation, in the present case riding the rails with a gutter punk he befriended. His account is interspersed with thoughts from Jack Kerouac and Jack London, and ample documentary photos from the Dust Bowl and depressions. Part 3, "Uncertain Knowledge," advocates a methodology involving sympathetic understanding rather than one that tries to capture objective knowledge from phenomena that might be uncertain and fleeting. Ferrell also links this work to his other unconventional research experiences—experiences he has turned into thoughtful, critical, well-regarded works. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through graduate students; general readers.

12. Cities in the urban age: a dissent. Beauregard, Robert A. Chicago, 2018. 213p index, 9780226535241 $90.00, 9780226535388 $30.00, 9780226535418 $30.00 Beauregard (Columbia) presents a treatise on contemporary American cities and their inherent contradictions. While his primary focus is the US, he holds that his arguments have relevance for cities around the world. His goal is to highlight the disparate impact of cities in both positive and negative ways on society, as opposed to those numerous current scholars who tend to focus on the positive aspects of cities in terms of their contributions to such facets as diversity, creativity, productivity and economic growth. The contradictions found in American cities that the author most strongly focuses on are those between wealth and poverty, environmental destruction and sustainability, oligarchy and democracy, and intolerance and tolerance. The overriding objective of the author seems to be to highlight the complexity of what cities bring to society and to encourage scholars to bring a broader frame to how they conceptualize cities in their research. This work provides an interesting counter perspective to much of contemporary urban scholarship. It will be of strongest interest to students and scholars of urban studies and urban planning as well as urban sociology. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

13. Journeys: resilience and growth for survivors of intimate partner abuse, Gender and justice, 5. Miller, Susan L. California, 2018. 276p bibl index, 9780520286085 $85.00, 9780520286108 $29.95, 9780520961463 $29.95 Miller (sociology and criminal justice, Univ. of Delaware) presents the findings of a study of 31 survivors of interpersonal violence and abuse (IPV/A). A new concept advanced by the author, IPV/A is broader than IPV. Miller is concerned not just with IPV/A per se but also with long-term survival. The author devotes chapters to an overview of the subject, the methodology of her research, and analysis of the history and context of the abusive relationships, processing the abuse with a focus on restructuring the lives of her subjects and strategies for long-term survival. The final chapter, "Paths to Survivorship and Suggestions for Policy," places the findings in context. The text is well written and accessible to
nonspecialists. Miller makes effective use of direct quotes but includes very few tables. This book is appropriate for those interested in counseling, psychology, sociology, or social work. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

This intriguing sociological study delivers more than its title advertises. It is, to be sure, a work of ethnography that examines band life in a college music town. But Ramirez (Texas A & M Univ., Corpus Christi) adapts the oral history of 48 independent rock performers in Athens, Georgia, to offer a life-course perspective that highlights the changing adolescent-to-adult analytics of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Framing the life choices of his subjects within structural, social, and cultural contexts, Ramirez expands understanding of ageing into adulthood, particularly as it applies to the current generation. The narrative is clearly written without jargon, and the author demonstrates an admirable grasp of the existing scholarly literature. The stories of the musicians allow Ramirez to construct a gendered analysis of how women and men work in a field that the larger society dismisses as a leisure activity to be forsaken once one “grows up.” As his respondents and Ramirez compellingly establish, existing parameters of adulthood need to be reconsidered. This is an excellent addition to an evolving area of scholarship. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.

Central to this volume’s thesis is the notion of intersectionality, how interlocking systems of inequality—racism, sexism, heterosexism, and economic oppression—contribute to aggression, subjugation, and differential justice system outcomes for girls of color, poor girls, and LGBTQ girls. Contributors, who are primarily sociologists and criminologists, uncover structural inequalities that shape behavior by examining the media representations of girls’ aggression and the criminalization of this behavior. Essays cover a wide range of topics, including moral panics and the policing of girlhood, news media depictions of violent girls, the female world of love and ritual violence, African American girl fights on social media, violence in delinquent girls’ lives, sex trafficking, the racialized sexualization of Latina girls, and female bullying. Unique for its focus on intersectionality, this collection provides a deep, informed way to understand the issues related to female aggression by illuminating the role that social institutions play in how girls of different backgrounds are labeled and treated in society. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.

Griffith (history, Queens Univ. of Charlotte) describes how liberal Protestants, especially Young Men’s Christian Association officials and allied religious organizations, helped advance civil rights for Asian Americans. YMCA secretaries such as John Mott, Sidney Gulick, Galen Fisher, John Merle Davis, and George Gleason joined with industrialist John D. Rockefeller Jr. and others to challenge nativism, immigrant exclusion, and anti-Asian sentiment. Christian internationalism and the sociopolitical activism
of missionaries who had served abroad helped shape and energize these efforts. As nativism and immigration restriction crested after WW I, YMCA secretaries recruited sociologist Robert Park and other social scientists for the Survey of Race Relations, which showed how racial prejudice and segregation worked against Chinese and Japanese people on the Pacific Coast. The secretaries also founded the Institute of Pacific Relations to promote international understanding and the vision of a Pacific community. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, they opposed the internment of Japanese Americans and advocated for their civil rights in the postwar period. This illuminating study documents how liberal Protestant activists mobilized against racial discrimination and engaged in interracial coalition-building. Summing Up: Recommended. Undergraduates and general readers.

September 2018


This is the third edition of Diversity in the Power Elite, and each edition bears its own subtitle (1st ed., subtitled Have Women and Minorities Reached the Top?, CH, Jul'98, 35-6547; 2nd ed., How It Happened, Why It Matters, CH, Apr’07, 44-4767). The subtitle of the present edition signifies Zweigenhaft and Domhoff’s shift in emphasis, with a series of chapters describing the modest increase in diversity in the power elite. Somewhat tedious chapters on Jews, women, blacks, Latinos, Asians, and LGBT people form the core of the book. The most interesting chapter is the last one, "The Ironies of Diversity." The authors argue that the central irony is that the diversity achieved "reinforces the unchanging nature of the class structure and increases the tendency to ignore class inequalities." Another featured irony is the "improbable partnership" between African American leaders and Republican leaders to redistrict southern states into a few majority African American congressional districts and mostly predominately white districts with Republican majorities. To understand the limited gains in diversity, one must understand that class, education, and skin color are crucial, as is the ability to conform to the white Christian male culture that still dominates the upper echelon of US society. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates.

2. We rise to resist: voices from a new era in women's political action. ed. by Paula W. Dál and Betty L. Wells. McFarland, 2018. 272p bibl index, 9781476671642 $39.95, 9781476632957

In We Rise to Resist, Dál and Wells offer essays detailing the re-emergence of the women’s movement in the aftermath of the election of Donald Trump. According to the editors, these are “protest statements” by women as “first-person writers,” and the the result is an “evolving historical record” of a resurgent political movement. Joining recent works on the Women’s March such as Together We Rise (2018), Why We March (2017), and Rise Up! (2017), We Rise to Resist is an ode to grassroots resistance with a special focus on personal reflections of female activists from different races, classes, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, and sexual orientations. Contributors represent a range of women’s voices, giving new meaning to “the personal is political” by detailing the intersections of women’s lived experiences in the changing post-election landscape. Essays focus on climate-change science, environmentalism, healthcare, race relations, immigration, and public education, to name just a few of the topics. The volume serves not only as a springboard for classroom discussions but also as a unique documentary source for future generations. We Rise to Resist contextualizes third-wave feminism by highlighting the diversity of women’s experiences while offering a space for reflection and a call for political action with
the departing question: “What will you do?” Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.


Comprehensive, measured, and well researched, this may be the most important book of the year. Sociologists Bradley Campbell (California State Univ., Los Angeles) and Jason Manning (West Virginia Univ.) trace the history and development of “victimhood culture” in the US and the culture wars that have engulfed the country as a result of that victimhood mentality. The authors do a masterful job of explaining the nation’s shift from a culture of honor, to a culture of dignity, to one of victimhood. The last is marked by hypersensitivity to any perceived slight and often leads to exaggeration and the need to publicly highlight one’s victimization through appeals to sympathetic authorities and allied third parties. On college campuses in particular, the rise of structures and procedures to address such slights (aka microaggressions) has led to the institutionalization of “safe spaces,” “trigger warnings,” and a proliferation of counseling centers, administrators, and support staff. The shift has also resulted in a series of destructive, unintended consequences, including moral panics, false accusations, curtailing of free speech, assaults on academic freedom, “competitive victimhood” (across the lines of race, class, gender, religion, and sexual orientation), and incidents of violent backlash. Required reading for those seeking to move beyond the seeming downward spiral of becoming a nation of victims. Summing Up: Essential. All readers.

4. Enlightenment now: the case for reason, science, humanism, and progress. Pinker, Steven. Viking, 2018. 556p bibl index, 9780525427575 $35.00, 9780698177888

A renowned scientist and popularizer of science, Pinker (psychology, Harvard) makes a moral, political, and philosophic case for the values and practices of the Enlightenment. He sees enemies on both the Right and the Left; they include traditional religion, populist tribalism, and Nietzschean postmodernism. Pinker begins with the good news. Graph after graph shows that humans are living longer, healthier, and happier lives and that violence and loneliness are down. The optimistic 18th-century philosophes have been vindicated, the fears of the Romantic pessimists falsified. True, the planet faces serious threats like global warming and nuclear arms, but pragmatic solutions are available. Pinker concludes with a philosophical defense of science, which he contends is entirely in harmony with humanistic values. The future is bright, if religion, tribalism, and "second culture" pessimism can be kept at bay. As a polemic the book is effective, and its unashamed, old-fashioned scientism is refreshing and probably currently useful. But perhaps the picture is a little too perfect. Historians may cavil at Pinker's traditional account of the Enlightenment; philosophers may think his scorn for alternatives overdone. But Pinker's lively prose and persuasive use of examples give his argument considerable impact. Summing Up: Recommended. All readers.


In recent decades, historians have written on the history of welfare policies in the US, but scholars of social work focused on scientific research have paid little attention to this history. Popple (social work, Univ. of Texas, Arlington) argues that social work is based more on values (and some myths) than on science, and that students should study the history of the profession’s practice alongside US social
welfare history. Popple does just that in this chronological survey, which extends from Colonial America to the present. He dedicates to each period two chapters, one on welfare policy and one one the social work profession’s response to it. He covers the emergence of social work, the establishment of schools of social work, and social work’s changing self-perception from philanthropy to a basis in science. After WW II, when the US government assumed responsibility for economic aid to the poor, social workers took on more therapy-oriented roles and vacillated between social action and individual care during the tumultuous 1960s. In the past two decades, because of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program and federal funding for child protection, social workers’ focus has returned to child welfare issues, practicing them within community agencies. The author provides important historical context for social work practice. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.


Whittier (sociology, Smith College) has written a fascinating book about the shifting relationship between feminists and conservative activists on federal legislative debates about pornography, child sexual violence, and violence against women. She devotes a lengthy chapter to each, and each chapter can stand alone. The three core chapters are bracketed by an introductory chapter, which provides both theoretical and empirical background, and a concluding chapter, which draws out the implications of the case studies for sociological research. Whittier makes excellent use of transcripts from Congressional hearings—drawing on them to elucidate the relative roles of conservatives and feminists in framing issues—and of news reports, feminist and conservative publications, contemporaneous interviews, and archives of activist groups. This is truly an interdisciplinary book, using historical method to answer sociological questions. Although Whittier has previously written on each of the three issues—for example, in *Feminist Generations: The Persistence of the Radical Women's Movement* (CH, Dec'95, 33-2449)—the present book zeroes in on the complex and often troubled relationships between the partially opposed “frenemies” who find different models of alliance on each issue. Whittier’s findings are especially important in demonstrating the influence of political context on social movement outcomes and also in providing empirical evidence about the pros and cons of “getting in bed with the enemy.” Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.

7. *Contemporary issues in victimology: identifying patterns and trends*, ed. by Carly M. Hilinski-Rosick and Daniel R. Lee. Lexington Books, 2018. 272p bibl index, 9781498566377 $100.00, 9781498566384 $95.00

Each of the 11 essays in this book of readings provides a review and update of a specific area of victimology. The content is arranged in two broad areas: one focuses on types of victims (elders, same sex, children), the other on types of contexts in which victimization occurs (e.g., college campuses). The chapters include some areas that are not commonly investigated, such as victimization in corrections, and relatively new areas, such as cybercrime. On the whole, the chapters are independent, well written, and well referenced. The authors have experience with or published in the areas they review. There are no illustrations, charts, or tables. The index is limited. The reading level is within the reach of undergraduate students. For libraries serving departments of criminal justice, criminology, social work, or sociology that seek to maintain expanded resources. Summing Up: Recommended. All academic levels/libraries.
8. **Building the prison state: race and the politics of mass incarceration.** Schoenfeld, Heather. Chicago, 2018. 370p bibl index, 9780226520964 $105.00, 9780226521015 $35.00, 9780226521152 $35.00

In her impressive tome, sociologist Schoenfeld (Northwestern) traces the political and social mechanisms that fueled the growth of the prison industrial complex with its evident ties to race within the state of Florida. While doing so, she incorporates several theories to unravel this complex history as one that although unnecessary was an eventual outcome of policy decisions. There is quite a bit of information to absorb in this text. Chapter 1 introduces many ideas but is so weighted with theory that some explanations of terms and their contexts are better shared in later chapters. The text provides very concrete road maps throughout; therefore, it may be prudent to read as written and then reread chapter 1 later for better clarity. That said, this work ties theory, federal, state, and local history together so well that those who finish this work could concretely say they could envision the evolution of prisons and their supporting systems and how race factors into this history. Additionally, readers can also see the new evolution this system may experience. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

9. **Stick together and come back home: racial sorting and the spillover of carceral identity.** Lopez-Aguado, Patrick. California, 2018. 226p bibl index, 9780520288584 $85.00, 9780520288591 $29.95, 9780520963450

Sociologist Lopez-Aguado (Santa Clara Univ.) provides an in-depth, detailed example of the ways in which the criminal justice system replicates the racist inclinations of the larger society. The author tracks 70 subjects as they wind their way through the criminal justice system, which serves as a machine of racism that further inculcates the whims of the dominant culture. The book serves as an excellent application of labeling theory, as it exposes the system’s efforts to sort and judge people based on their racial characteristics, not necessarily on the threat they pose to society. For example, prisoners are grouped along racial lines, ostensibly to quell racial tensions within the prisons. The practice only enhances the “us versus them” mentality and the defensiveness that is inherent in the newly incarcerated. The resulting paradigm is then exported back into the community when the prisoner is released. In minority “high incarceration” neighborhoods, this reinforced paradigm only drives the wedge between racial groups deeper, and facilitates the incarceration loop ad infinitum. In this way, the system at once reflects and reproduces the racist views of the society it serves, ensuring that the racial divide is exacerbated. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

10. **Trapped in a vice: the consequences of confinement for young people.** Cox, Alexandra L. Rutgers, 2018. 218p index, 9780813570471 $99.95, 9780813570464 $28.95, 9780813570488 $28.95

Trapped in a Vice is an eye-opener. Cox (sociology, Univ. of Essex, UK) details what others have been writing about for the last few years, the process by which juveniles in the US can be given life sentences without the possibility of parole. No other country engages in such absurd and inhumane treatment of its children. Across five chapters the author reveals the depth of damage that a criminal justice system can deliver. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2012 (Miller v. Alabama) that life without the possibility of parole is cruel and unusual punishment when the subject is a juvenile, even if the crime is murder. Cox is ahead of the game with this carefully researched book. For this reviewer one chapter stands out: "Ungovernability and Worth." In it Cox looks carefully at a 16-year-old teen ("Michael") who is constantly stopped by the police, for no reason other than the color of his skin, his gender, and the color of his clothes. For this, and bad conduct reports in school, Michael was deemed—by his teachers and
even his parents—ungovernable and worthless. Released in the "Critical Issues in Crime and Society" series, this is a telling book. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers.

August 2018

This book traces the historical roots and the patterns and consequences of residential segregation in major US metropolitan areas during the past half century since the passing of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Using census and survey data, in-depth interviews in Chicago, and administrative records, sociologists Krysan (Univ. of Illinois at Chicago) and Crowder (Univ. of Washington) observe the persistence of residential stratification despite some progress. A review of the traditional theoretical perspectives on residential segregation indicates that these theories, though useful, are not sufficient to explain the continuing cycle of segregation. The authors offer a new theoretical perspective that takes into account the various stages of the residential selection process, the role of social networks, lived experiences, access to information about neighborhoods, and so forth that influence the housing search process. They argue that segregation is continually replicated through its reciprocal relationships with a variety of socioeconomic processes, and suggest policy implications and an agenda for future research. This book is exemplary in carving out a new theoretical model and makes a valuable contribution to race, urban, and policy studies. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above; professionals.

2. Hurt : chronicles of the drug war generation. Boeri, Miriam. California, 2018. 268p bibl index, 9780520293465 $85.00, 9780520293472 $29.95, 9780520966710
The war on drugs is one of the most discussed and debated issues in criminology and criminal justice research. Sociologist Boeri (Bentley Univ.) lifts back the curtain on some of the more unseen aspects of drug use and abuse. The author insightfully explores the public and social costs of addiction, public policy, and the war on drugs. Rather than overwhelming readers with statistics and reviews of prior research, she presents ethnographic accounts of drug use that challenge how individuals typically perceive drug users, bringing attention to the experiences of individuals impacted by the war on drugs. In fact, the author even presents an autoethnographic account of her own experiences in dealing with the drug use of a sibling. The book contains a complete list of references, notes for further details on claims and statements made throughout the text, and a comprehensive index, providing great source material for research on drug policy. This enlightening, well-written text will be an appreciated addition to any library collection, especially those supporting sociology, history, or criminology and criminal justice programs. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

3. The making of a teenage service class : poverty and mobility in an American city. Ray, Ranita. California, 2018. 286p bibl index, 9780520292055 $85.00, 9780520292062 $29.95, 9780520965614
Sociologist Ray (UNLV) focuses on a timely and important topic: teenage workers. Her book is based on three years of qualitative fieldwork as well as interviews with and observations of 16 young men and women in "Port City," a small northeastern town. The author focuses on the lives of these marginalized youth, especially low-income, African American, Latino/a youth coming of age in the US with aspirations of upward mobility and college education. Their attempts to avoid gangs, drugs, and other risky behaviors and hopes of enrolling in college often trap these youth in low-wage service sector jobs. Ray
argues: “The emphasis on risk behaviors ignores structural impediments such as a failing education system, the constraints of low-wage work, lack of healthcare, a failing transportation system, and food insecurity.” The book's nine chapters and epilogue show how policies to combat risky behavior end up reinforcing existing racial and class inequalities, with many young people stuck in a vicious cycle of poverty. Of interest to graduate students and scholars studying poverty, inequality, and the sociology of youth. Chapter 1, “The Mobility Puzzle and Irreconcilable Choices,” will especially be useful to those teaching ethnography and qualitative methods at the graduate level. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students and faculty.

4. Securitized citizens: Canadian Muslims’ experiences of race relations and identity formation post-9/11. Nagra, Baljit. Toronto, 2017. 262p bibl index, 9781442631977 $75.00, 9781442628663 $27.95, 9781442624474 $27.95

This important study presents the lived experiences and challenges encountered by second-generation, well-educated young Canadian Muslims after 9/11. Basing her study on in-depth interviews of Muslim youth in Toronto and Vancouver, Nagra (criminology, Univ. of Ottawa) examines the impact of discrimination on their lives and how they react to state surveillance practices at airports and borders. She also discusses safety and security issues, the role of gender, religious and national identity, and marginalization in the context of the policy of multiculturalism. This research shows how young Muslims experience national belonging and how they face exclusion despite legal citizenship. The personal narratives illustrate respondents’ experiences of hate crimes, stigmatization, racial profiling, and extra surveillance, which lead to their loss of national belonging, legal rights, religious freedom, economic security, and safety. Nagra also reveals the various strategies young Canadian Muslims use to resist stereotypes imposed on them. She focuses on the process of reactive identity formation and how young Muslims make sense of their lives by maintaining dual Muslim and Canadian identity. This timely book makes an outstanding contribution to the disciplines of religion, race-ethnicity, and public policy. Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates and above; professionals.

5. Thriving in an all-boys club: female police and their fight for equality. Rabe-Hemp, Cara E. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018. 207p bibl index, 9781442274297 $38.00, 9781442274303 $36.00

Rabe-Hemp (Illinois State University) uses women’s firsthand accounts, media stories, and academic research to present the experiences of women in the US police force in the 1980s, 1990s, and present day. She weaves together the structural forms of inequality that women face in a nontraditional occupation—harassment, gatekeeping for sex segregation, barriers to advancement, etc. along with the cultural stereotypes of gender and motherhood that serve as barriers for women in police work. Rabe-Hemp explores how the field of police work has changed over the decades and how gendered conceptions impacted and were impacted by those changes. Importantly, the author contributes to academic discussions of the social construction of gender at work and how those conceptions trace back to some of the earliest examples of women in police work. Written in an accessible format, Roth-Hemp’s book blends an academic analysis of a highly gendered occupation with concrete advice and recommendations for women and men in police work. Summing Up: Recommended. General collections, lower-division undergraduates, and professionals.
6. Law enforcement in the age of Black Lives Matter: policing black and brown bodies. ed. by Sandra E. Weissinger and Dwayne A. Mack. Lexington Books, 2018. 216p bibl index, 9781498553599 $95.00, 9781498553605 $90.00

Although many aspects of law enforcement in its function of social control have been well documented, much less analyzed are the mechanisms, beliefs, and ideologies that govern police policies, enforcement, discourse, and, by extension, the minority experience, particularly of black and brown people. Seeking active engagement, reform, and social justice in the age of Black Lives Matter, Weissinger and Mack masterfully document one of the country's most consequential historical issues—social and criminal injustice by the criminal justice system, particularly in police institutions. Contributing authors vividly assess and masterfully delineate the historical, social, legal, philosophical, and ideological forces shaping and reshaping the black and Latino/a experience with police and the mainstream US. In the current highly charged political climate, the book is a timely education in policing minority communities and race/ethnic relations and vital for sociology, history, ethnic/minority studies, and criminal justice collections. Definitely a must read for anyone interested in better understanding the black and brown experience with police in the US and for those vested in positive transformation as Americans strive for better lives, a better future. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All public and academic levels/libraries.

7. Stick together and come back home: racial sorting and the spillover of carceral identity. Lopez-Aguado, Patrick. California, 2018. 226p bibl index, 9780520288584 $85.00, 9780520288591 $29.95, 9780520963450

Sociologist Lopez-Aguado (Santa Clara Univ.) provides an in-depth, detailed example of the ways in which the criminal justice system replicates the racist inclinations of the larger society. The author tracks 70 subjects as they wind their way through the criminal justice system, which serves as a machine of racism that further inculcates the whims of the dominant culture. The book serves as an excellent application of labeling theory, as it exposes the system’s efforts to sort and judge people based on their racial characteristics, not necessarily on the threat they pose to society. For example, prisoners are grouped along racial lines, ostensibly to quell racial tensions within the prisons. The practice only enhances the “us versus them” mentality and the defensiveness that is inherent in the newly incarcerated. The resulting paradigm is then exported back into the community when the prisoner is released. In minority “high incarceration” neighborhoods, this reinforced paradigm only drives the wedge between racial groups deeper, and facilitates the incarceration loop ad infinitum. In this way, the system at once reflects and reproduces the racist views of the society it serves, ensuring that the racial divide is exacerbated. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.


Law professor Reitz (Univ. of Minnesota) has edited a volume of 11 lengthy papers plus an introduction on the US divergence from other Western nations in its high rates of violent crime combined with a punitive approach in the treatment of offenders. Central problems addressed include mass incarceration, racial disparities, use of capital punishment, a rise in probation supervision rates and punitiveness, a decline in parole release, and an increase in fines and forfeitures in disproportionate and discriminatory ways. In addition, the collateral consequences of convictions on the reintegration of offenders separate the US from much of the developed world. Even more troubling is that there appears to be little change in these policies despite a drop in serious crimes since the early 1990s. Solutions will
be difficult. “For those who would advocate major changes, however, one serious problem will be the difficulty of ground-level, unglamorous implementation” in the face of crime-mongering rhetoric in the US political system. An interesting contribution, analogous to Mugambi Jouet’s Exceptional America: What Divides Americans from the World and from Each Other (CH, Oct’17, 55-0819), which addresses exceptionalism from a broader social perspective. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students and faculty.

Private prisons are for-profit companies that own prisons and run government-owned facilities. They are multinational, multibillion dollar businesses traded on the stock exchange, but the few books on the topic are often by journalists and activists. Eisen's comprehensive and thorough examination of the topic “endeavors a fair-minded look” at the industry and largely delivers through her exhaustive literature review, reporting on site visits, and interviews. The 11 chapters include the birth of private prisons, prisoners as commodities, politics, immigrant detention, and conceptual arguments about whether prisons are a government function like trash collection that can be privatized. On each topic, Eisen (senior counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice) provides a great deal of information that represents many sides of the debate. While this wealth of information and anecdote is organized into sections within chapters, many of the sections are quite short, and the connections between them are underdeveloped. Likewise, neither individual chapters nor the book itself has conclusions where the author extracts keys points or synthesizes important findings. Nevertheless, an important book. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above. Professionals.

July 2018

Writing for students new to the study of stratification and mobility, sociologists Wysong (Indiana Univ. Kokomo) and Perrucci (Purdue) take issue not only with conservative and neoliberal policies and ideas but also with those of mainstream liberals. Their primer features clear and succinct conceptualization, references to current events, and data on economic trends. The authors interpret current grassroots social movements striving for greater racial, social, economic, and political equality on the heels of the short-lived “Occupy Wall Street uprising” as indicative of “today’s inequality wars.” They fear that growing inequality, even in the face of populist Trumpism, is being normalized with a narrative that excuses the immense gap between a minority doing well and a disempowered majority experiencing stagnating wages, declining status and security, and historically low chances for their children’s success. As for globalization; the insecurities of a gig economy, declining unionization, robotics and a diminution of well-paying blue-collar jobs, contraction of public services, and political campaigns funded by an ultra-wealthy “superclass,” the new normal says “get used to it.” This descriptive, theoretically friendly examination of class structure in late capitalism offers a good introduction. Unfortunately, it falls short on “how to challenge it.” Summing Up: Recommended. General, public, and undergraduate libraries.

Sociologists Hunter (UCLA) and Robinson (Rhodes College) offer a refreshing, in-depth analysis of how networks among African Americans in cities have created what is known in everyday parlance as “chocolate cities.” Arguably, the most famed among them are Washington, D.C., and Atlanta. However, the authors take readers through a labyrinth of history via various personalities, historical figures in music, and the African American experience. The study is from Emancipation to the present day. After reading this book, readers will have a solid comprehension of life within the context of black lives in the cities forged in the crucible of struggle. In other words, Hunter and Robinson offer an insight into the ways black folks have eked out a social world regardless of the racism, segregation, and brutality often concomitant in cities across the North American experience. The irony is that in their pursuit of inner-city happiness, African Americans have actually altered the landscape of mainstream “milky” America. Indeed, as the authors conclude, “… Black is a map. Black is a country. Black is a city. Black is a village. And its future is wrapped in chocolate.” For undergraduates, graduates, and any lay reader interested in black life in the US. Summing Up: Essential. All public and academic levels/libraries.

3. American nightmares: social problems in an anxious world. Best, Joel. California, 2018. 227p bibl index, 9780520296343 $85.00, 9780520296350 $29.95, 9780520968905

This collection of essays has two worthy though nonrelated themes. While Best (Delaware) continues to enlighten readers as to ways to contextualize social problems, he also scolds sociologists for their overidentification with marginalized populations. The chapter “Memories as Problems,” which examines the Confederate battle flag, as well as the discussion of the social equivalence of dangers such as guns and marijuana in “Popular Hazards,” would fit well as readings for undergraduates. But the author has another audience in mind, the professional sociologist. In the “American Nightmares” chapter, Best calls the discipline to task for moving away from the nuanced middle. Distressed by sociology’s negative treatment of the American Dream, he argues that the discipline’s attacks on this easily debunked foil is a weakness in contemporary texts and monographs. The final essay sounds a note of sociological sour grapes regarding the loss of status of the sociologist in public discourse and the triumph of an economic world view. Both professional sociologists and undergraduate students will find part of this small collection thought provoking. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates; faculty.

4. Gender in the twenty-first century: the stalled revolution and the road to equality. ed. by Shannon N. Davis, Sarah Winslow, and David J. Maume. California, 2017. 295p bibl index, 9780520291386 $85.00, 9780520291393 $34.95, 9780520965188

According to the editors, the purpose of the book is to examine how “gender affects our social interactions and our social institutions which, in turn, influence our everyday lives.” It is not exactly breaking news that societies place different expectations on boys and girls, or that gender, as opposed to sex, is socially constructed, and that gender differences can lead to gender inequality. The articles are thoroughly researched and present a convincing picture of many societal institutions, such as family, education, work, religion, the military, and sports, while also considering gender politics as they affect various segments of society, such as corporate America, health care, and immigration, to name a few. The book’s strength is its in-depth analysis of the contemporary US; the unscripted and sometimes hidden ways in which gender impacts male and female lives are described in illuminating detail. The
chapter on gay rodeos in Texas, especially, presents gender issues in an innovative way. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates, graduate students, and researchers/faculty.

This ambitious book seeks to situate the Occupy movement in the larger context of social movement literature. The author employs an ethnographic approach to detail the many facets of the Occupy Philadelphia movement. Spending between 20 and 40 hours a week at the Occupy Philly encampment, sociologist Leveille (West Chester Univ.) is able to drill down and sketch a compelling picture of Occupy Philly. In so doing, he not only provides a rich account of the debates and fissures within Occupy Philly, but also examines how the movement fits into theories of social movements. Leveille is at his best in describing the schisms that emerged in the movement, and its relationship to outside forces. He also provides an interesting analysis of how the mainstream media framed it, and how it resisted these frames. Claiming that a rebooted version of Marxism that fits a postmodern age is the best approach to understanding the movement, the author combines a number of theoretical strands, from Adorno to Althusser. His attempt at theoretical synthesis is less successful than his in-depth account of the myriad contradictions of the Occupy movement. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

June 2018

1. Urban rage: the revolt of the excluded. Dikeç, Mustafa. Yale, 2017. 252p bibl index, 9780300214949 $26.00, 9780300231212
Urban protests seem to be sudden and unforeseen events, yet urban rioting and resistance arrive periodically like the plague of locusts. While many people, usually those in power, paint the demonstrators as individuals driven by psychological dysfunction or criminal intent who have lost a sense of civility, Dikeç (urban studies, Univ. Paris-Est) reminds readers that when people have grievances and suffer injustices, eventually and predictably the outcome will be what he labels "urban rage." Officials treat lawless demonstrations and destruction with more charity when these are the actions of celebrating sports fans. When it is the disenfranchised, criticisms and denunciations come pouring out. Through a journey of protests in cities across continents, Dikeç shows that urban rage is the legacy of past injustices periodically resurrected, a product of sociostructural roots in the age of finance capital and transmitted through sustained urban poverty dooming generation after generation. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.

2. Unequal foundations: inequality, morality, and emotions across cultures. by Steven Hitlin and Sarah K. Harkness. Oxford, 2018. 229p bibl index, 9780190465407 $75.00, 9780190862435 Social psychologists Hitlin and Harkness (both, Univ. of Iowa) believe that moral emotions are embedded in the language of different societies. They believe that "in societies that have greater economic inequality, the sanctioning-based moral emotions of anger, contempt, disgust, shame will be more frequent and severe." To test this, they compare the US, Canada, Germany, Japan, and China. This could have yielded a traditional East/West division. Instead, they found that the US and China, the two most unequal societies in this set, were similar, and the other three, which are more equal, grouped together. How one evaluates this very interesting finding will depend on how one views their method. The authors wanted to study the moral emotions embedded in ordinary language, but knew that the
equivalent word in different languages often carries a different moral weight. To account for this, they used preexisting dictionaries from each of these countries, in which students had given quantitative values on several different dimensions to various words. The researchers then ran 2,000 simulations using equivalently weighted sentences from each of these languages to see if the patterns of moral emotions correlated with inequality. Summing Up: Recommended. Graduate students/faculty.

3. Writing the world of policing: the difference ethnography makes. ed. by Didier Fassin. Chicago, 2017. 301p bibl index, 9780226497501 $90.00, 9780226497648 $30.00, 9780226497785 $30.00
Policing is an important topic in criminal justice research, discussion, and debate. In this edited collection's 12 chapters, scholars from across the globe explore the institution of policing. The authors discuss policing in South Africa, India, Taiwan, Mozambique, Turkey, Chile, Bolivia, Thailand, Portugal, France, and the US. As the field of criminology has matured, the use of quantitative methods to analyze social phenomena has become widespread. This book breaks from the trend by taking an ethnographic approach to examining police and policing. The contributing authors specifically examine topics such as discretion, violence, and training. Each chapter contains a full bibliography and a list of notes for further details on claims and statements made throughout the text. This informative, well-written book will be a valued addition to university library collections seeking to support anthropology, sociology, or criminology and criminal justice programs. It could serve as a resource for research or as assigned reading for graduate seminars concerning policing or qualitative research methods in criminology and criminal justice. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

4. The urban church imagined: religion, race, and authenticity in the city. by Jessica M. Barron and Rhys H. Williams. New York University, 2017. 195p bib, 9781479877669 $89.00, 9781479887101 $30.00, 9781479802371
This ethnographic study examines the structure and dynamics of a religious congregation in the city of Chicago. This unconventional designer church, an "outreach effort by a mega-church that exists well outside of the metropolitan area," includes whites, blacks, Asians, and Latinx who happen to be young, hip, dynamic, middle-class, and manifest a lifestyle of leisure. The authors, basing their study on interviews, participant observation, content analysis of sermons, and marketing materials, explore the history, organizational structure, worship, and other activities of "Downtown Church," including outreach projects and politics. By adopting the "racialized urban imaginary" conceptual framework, this research reveals the nature of white leadership and its managed diversity, tensions, and conflicts between the white leadership and members of ethnoracial minorities, interracial romance, the consumer culture, and the urban context. The authors demonstrate how the racialized urban imaginary affects the religious practices, organizations, and identity of this recently formed congregation, and the complex interactions among race, religion, class, gender, cultural consumption, and the city. The discussion revolves around the key concepts of racialized urban imaginary, managed diversity, and racial utility. A significant contribution to religion, race, and urban studies. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.

259p index, 9781517901721 $100.00, 9781517901738 $24.95, 9781452955865
Snorton (Africana studies and feminist, gender, and sexuality studies, Cornell) makes an essential contribution to gender studies and black studies. He draws from multiple epistemologies to help readers reconsider "trans" as both a term and an identity. The text is "an attempt to find a vocabulary for black
and trans life ... it works to do more than provide a 'shadow history' or blackness in trans studies or transness in black studies.” Snorton seeks vocabularies for black and trans life through the science of sexuality, through explorations of transatlantic literature, and through the afterlife of Phillip DeVine. The author shares in the acknowledgments that he wrote this book “for those of you who have made new names and found new modes of naming.” That acknowledgment is the foundation of what his book accomplishes: to create new names and new modes of engaging with the past, and to wrestle with modes of categorization in literatures and archives, and with the collective amnesia that allows mainstream memory to forget Phillip DeVine as it memorializes Brandon Teena. This book is an outstanding contribution to conversations about black and trans studies; it will transform scholarly understandings of both fields and the intersections between them. Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates and above; professionals.

May 2018

1. White out: understanding white privilege and dominance in the modern age. by Christopher S. Collins and Alexander Jun. Peter Lang, 2017. 124p, index, 9781433135415 $29.93

Collins and Jun (both, education, Azusa Pacific Univ.) offer an accessible introduction to racial politics in the 21st century. Specifically, they provide a basic primer on whiteness and power today. Consequently, their book is useful for teaching challenging topics like white privilege, microaggressions, and intersectionality. The authors write in an engaging manner, helpfully unpacking difficult concepts and illustrating them with relatable examples. As the title suggests, the monograph seeks to understand the ways in which stories and structures perpetuate white supremacy in a multicultural world. The volume's nine chapters work through a series of overlapping ideas. The introduction frames the project, outlining the ways in which racial dispositions shape representation and interpretation. Subsequent chapters read white pain against systematic oppression; work through white privilege, microaggressions, and the reproduction of white dominance; and challenge readers to see themselves in the complex and contradictory racial politics of the day. The closing chapters map paths forward. This book will be most impactful for readers unfamiliar with its key ideas. Thus, its greatest utility is in the classroom and its largest audience students. Finally, the work will likely be most effective at historically white colleges and universities. Summing Up: Recommended. General readers and undergraduate collections.


Stryker (gender and women's studies, Univ. of Arizona) charts “a history of transgender people in the United States, concentrating mostly on the years after World War II.” This book is a substantial update to the original edition, published in 2008 (CH, May'09, 46-5351). The first chapter defines terms like "gender" and "identity politics" and brilliantly foregrounds the rest of the text. The five chapters that follow narrate a history of transgender people in the US through the aftermath of the 2016 election within “an expansive feminist framework.” Each chapter also includes small breakout sections that expand on terms like “gender dysphoria” and “drag balls” to guide less familiar readers through the text. Stryker deftly contextualizes the political divisions within the GLBT+ movement, especially during the movement to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act in 2007, and explores the divisions between the gay and transgender communities in regard to their relationships with the medical establishment. This book is required reading for historians, but it also represents an invaluable text for anyone who
wants to better understand evolving concepts of gender. Summing Up: Essential. All libraries at all levels.

   Milloy, Jeremy. Illinois, 2017. 218p bibl index, 9780252083389 $28.00, 9780774834568
   In this very well-researched book, Milloy (Trent Univ., Canada) explores the ways that workplace violence shaped work in postwar North American auto factories. He shows how workplaces were shaped by and shaped violence in Chrysler and Dodge factories in Detroit and Windsor, Ontario. Most unique is the author's use of the lens of workplace violence to explore labor relations and capitalism, racial inequality, and the construction of gender and masculinity in factory work, highlighting the social, economic, and cultural structures that obtained in the factories and that shaped workers’ lives. Moving beyond solely individual explanations for violence (e.g., mental health, access to weapons), Milloy encourages readers to explore the structural violence of class/labor exploitation, racism, and the performance/production of masculinity. A significant contribution to labor history scholarship that provides insight into contemporary understandings of workplace violence. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All academic levels/libraries.

   When he died in 2017, Zygmunt Bauman was acclaimed as a major social theorist of modern times. That reputation derives from a body of work appearing as he neared retirement, beginning in the 1980s. Sociologist Rattansi (visiting, Univ. of London) surveys Bauman's work from this period, offering succinct summaries of the various twists and turns the theorist's publications exhibited during these three decades. In assessing how they add up as a body of work, the author finds that in many respects Bauman’s thought comes up short. This embraces his work on modernity (including his study of the Holocaust), his subsequent postmodern turn, and, later, his rejection of postmodernism for his own metaphor of "liquid," which he employed on such topics as modernity, times, love, fear, and surveillance. Rattansi offers a remarkably comprehensive survey, and in so doing his work becomes—like Bauman’s—repetitious. But it does afford readers a helpful guide, and is good at pointing to the continuities and discontinuities in Bauman’s shifting theoretical framings. In the process, readers come to understand what Bauman was: not a systematic theorist, not an empirical sociologist, but a social philosopher who left enduring insights. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students, faculty.

   In this comprehensive, well-researched, engaging book, Horowitz (emer., American studies, Smith College) traces the history and development of positive psychology and happiness studies in the US. He explores how Eastern spiritual traditions, behavioral economics, neuroscience, evolutionary biology, and cognitive psychology have all contributed in some manner to the development of the field of “well-being.” He also identifies how a series of other factors gave rise to the happiness industry's prominence in contemporary US society. These factors include the birth and ascendance of computer technology and social media; charismatic leaders and proponents of the movement, most notably Oprah Winfrey and Joel Osteen; government and private philanthropic funding of research in this area; and, ultimately, the savvy marketing efforts and commodification of happiness by the “happiness industry.” Finally, though Horowitz notes the emphasis most happiness researchers have placed on the role of institutions
such as the family, schools, and the workplace on individual happiness, he suggests that research attention in the future may perhaps focus more on the role that inequality, social justice, social trust, the common good, and the environment play in fostering cultural happiness. A highly readable historical meditation on happiness. Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduates and above.


Max Weber's fascination with China has been well documented; Weber's intellectual engagement with China, however, has not been systematically studied until now. Prominent Weber scholar Barbalet (Australian Catholic Univ.) has published extensively on Weber's general theoretical contributions. From 2011 to 2017, the author taught in Hong Kong, where he immersed himself in the study of Chinese society. This new book is the final product of his intellectual endeavor. A serious engagement with Weber's The Religion of China (1915), it is both a critical examination of a sociological classic and a historical sociology of the rise (and lack of rise) of capitalism from imperial China to the present day. On the former topic, it is a close reading of Weber's writing on China, arguing that his understanding (and misunderstanding) of China had much to do with the Western conception of the Orient. On the latter, Barbalet reconsiders the role of the individual in Confucian thought, as well as in the development of capitalism in both China and the four Asian Tigers. A great book always raises more questions than it answers, as does Weber's classic work, and this book is no exception. It is a must read for both Weber scholars and China specialists, and will be of great interest to comparative-historical sociologists. Summing Up: Essential. Graduate students/faculty.

7. Gangs and the military: gangsters, bikers, and terrorists with military training. Smith, Carter F. Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. 264p index, 9781442275164 $38.00, 9781442275171 $36.00

Smith (criminal justice, Middle Tennessee State Univ.) provides a well-researched account of the intersection of gang life and military service, a neglected topic in the study of gangs and organized crime. Using surveys, official military and criminal justice reports, secondary sources, and personal experience as a former Criminal Investigations Division command special agent, Smith examines the consequences of gang members enlisted in the military and, conversely, gang members with military training in society. Though the former are potentially detrimental to military efficiency and morale, the latter pose a threat to civilian communities. Using an informal yet accessible style, the author includes a historical account of the connections between gangs and the military, a discussion of the key events that shaped government responses to the problem, an examination of anti-gang regulations and policies, and a risk assessment of what investigations have revealed about gang members in the military and gang members in society who possess military training. The accompanying website (http://gangsandthemilitary.com/) is useful, but a more detailed methods section and a tighter integration of theory, including a problematization of the gang concept, would have strengthened the work. Nonetheless, this is a welcome addition to criminology and military collections. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All public and academic levels/libraries.


This book is rather difficult to define. In part, it is an autobiographical rumination and confessional. Additionally, it is an introductory overview of how patriarchy and feminism have been defined and conceptualized historically and in contemporary society. Finally, it is a call to action for all men and
women to resist systems, institutions, and practices that promote and justify domination, objectification, and subordination of men over women, as well as men over men. Journalism professor Jensen (Texas), a self-proclaimed radical feminist, builds a compelling case revealing the injuries that “toxic masculinity” and patriarchy impose on both women and men. He pays particular attention to rape and rape culture, pornography and prostitution, and transgenderism, all the while challenging the pathology of patriarchy and the damage left in its wake. The result is an accessible, clearly written, informative, non-threatening introduction to radical feminism aimed at young men to help them consider how larger social structures and ideology affect their daily lives and the micro-level interactions in which they engage with women as well as with one another. Summing Up: Essential. Most levels/libraries.

9. Gender, crime & justice : exploring the dynamics. Wilczak, Andrew. L. Rienner, 2017. 291p bibl index, 9781626376595 $85.00, 9781626376601 $32.50, 9781626377103 $32.50 Wilczak (criminology and sociology, Wilkes Univ.) provides an excellent introduction to the topics of gender, crime, and punishment and how the fields of sociology and criminology have studied these issues to date. His approach is serious but accessible, making the book ideal for undergraduates or students without a lot of background in sociological theory. Weaving together classical theories, recent empirical studies, and contemporary examples from the news and media, Wilczak presents the complex subjects of gender, intersectionality, and criminal justice in relatable ways. The breadth of topics is impressive, ranging from gangs to child pornography. The book would be strengthened by moving the chapter on intersectionality from the conclusion to earlier in the book and by attending to Patricia Hill Collins’s work on the subject. Similarly, Judith Butler’s analysis of the performativity of gender would add nuance to the author’s discussion of gender early in the text. But overall, Wilczak provides a thorough overview of the existing theory and research on these important topics. The book is sure to spark interest in the topics presented and may inspire readers to fill in the empirical gaps relating to these subjects. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All public and academic levels/libraries.

10. The new Pakistani middle class. Maqsood, Ammara. Harvard, 2017. 194p bibl index, 9780674280038 $45.00 Maqsood (anthropology, Oxford) examines the concept of "modernity" as understood and appropriated by different segments of Pakistani society, in particular the old established middle class and the new, upwardly mobile middle class. Her research, based on fieldwork carried out in Lahore in 2009–10, focused on urban women's religious study groups and current patterns of "religious consumption," including styles of Islamic veiling, art, music, and television. Pakistan's experience with modernity goes back to its independence in 1947 and the rise of a postcolonial bourgeoisie referred to as the "established middle class." In contrast, the new middle class "consists of upwardly mobile [second generation] urban groups that have emerged since the 1980s," many of whom came from rural backgrounds. Unlike the older middle class, these groups are actively seeking a new understanding of Islam that focuses on personal piety and participation in the global Muslim community. The author, a Pakistani herself, provides a nuanced analysis of the complex interaction of religion, social class, and modernity in Pakistan. Her book is an important contribution to understanding the interplay of Islam, politics, and modernity in Pakistan as well as in other Muslim nation-states. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.