Book Reviews

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Crime and Justice in Two Societies: Japan and the United States by Ted D.
Westerman and James W. Burfeind. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1991.
211 pages. $17.95 paper.

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Keith Fernsler
Dickinson State University

The current upheavals in United States politics reflect the public view that we are a
society in decline. So long as America's abundant resources fueled industrial expansion and
economic world dominance, there were adequate riches to foster the development of an
institutional infrastructure to build cities, produce food surpluses, educate the children,
provide health care, and regulate crime. Now virtually every aspect of American society is
viewed as on the wrong track. With the lost of credibility of institutional bureaucracy,
putting things right seems impossible. Regardless of the arena of action, mounting debts
and dwindling funds hinder action. The major issues of the day have become the property of
entrenched, increasingly polarized groups, making consensus and compromise elusive. Given
these circumstances, the public's increasing air of hopelessness, opposition to established
leadership, and lack of support for the social system are understandable.

It is tempting to turn to the example of a society in ascendance to find out what
we can learn about reorienting our institutions. Japan provides such a model. Our
corporations can become "leaner and meaner" and build decent products as in Japan; the
Japanese version of "total quality management" can save our schools. Japan's low crime
rate, its highly effective police and criminal justice systems, its small prison
population, all suggest that we have much to learn from Japan.

In this context, Westerman and Burfeind's analysis is sobering. They make it
clear that it will not do to try and appropriate bits and pieces of Japanese society as
solutions to America's problems. While the focus of this book is on crime and justice in
these two societies, Westerman and Burfeind have much to tell us about what we can learn
from a comparative analysis of any institutions and social systems.

Their historical-anthropological perspective tells us that the Japanese system
works precisely because of Japan's historically developed centralized system and core
values. From its history of autocratic rule, Japan has moved slowly toward increasing
freedom and autonomy while maintaining centralized systems of social control. From its
roots in a style of agricultural production which fostered cooperation, the core values of
Japanese society have developed to emphasize group loyalty, individual responsibility and a
strong sense of duty. The crime rate is low because the Japanese are internally

compelled toward conformity and are restrained by their sense of place in powerful informal groups. *Japan's* homogeneity and inclusive religious system have fostered consensus.

The Japanese system of group control over individuals is in stark contrast to an American system which has stressed the core values of individualism and autonomy. The U.S. distrust of government, or any centralized, collective system, has produced a decentralized and highly fragmented social system. The diverse, heterogeneous character of American society, along with its religious tradition of exclusive groups and the separation of church and state, foster individualism at the expense of consensus and collective community action. High crime rates are the price of individual freedom in the U.S., and repressive external compulsion from the criminal justice bureaucracy supersedes informal group controls.

From this basic comparison, Westerman and Burfeind provide detailed histories and analyses which contrast crime and justice in the two societies. In terms of criminal law, the U.S. has developed a system which is adversarial, litigious, highly concerned about due process and civil rights, and occupied with objective proof of guilt or innocence. In Japan, the core value of group harmony produces an emphasis on the subjective motivations of offenders and ways to reintegrate offenders into society. Police work in Japan is nationalized, but is highly integrated into every community. The main focus is on public service and crime prevention. Management systems which stress extensive training, apprenticeships, and 'consultative' management styles effectively unite administrative and line officers. The police, like all public servants, are highly respected, in part because of the Japanese core value of hierarchy which demands mutual respect within hierarchies.

Police work is in profound contrast with U.S., where police are alienated from the community and their supervisors, the emphasis is on crime detection, public service functions have low status, and decentralization has produced a crazy-quilt of police organization. U.S. police are asked to enforce morality, while, in Japan, any effort to legislate morality would provoke shame over the failure to maintain harmony.

In the U.S., such efforts to legislate morality, as well as persistent inequality, racial strife, and "law and order" mentalities have resulted in high crime rates. The response has been to build more prisons and incarcerate rising numbers of offenders. With the perceived failure of rehabilitation, the goals of retribution and "selective incapacitation" dominate the correctional system.

In Japan, there are relatively few prisoners, partly because of the low crime rate, but also because of the extensive use of alternative dispositions, especially dispute resolution procedures at the community level. Volunteers are almost as important as corrections personnel in rehabilitating offenders, and rehabilitation is the main goal (but through hard work in prison industries rather than through American-style, psychological therapies).

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The last chapter is devoted to what can be learned from the comparisons I have roughly summarized to this point. Readers who expect to find whole solutions to America's problems are likely to be disappointed. In restrained fashion, Westermari and Burfeind suggest we might follow Japan in decriminalizing many moral offenses; efforts at increased community policing' might make our police more effective; and U.S. courts and prisons might not be so overcrowded if we made more use of alternative-dispute-- resolution techniques. However, each kind of possible reform is likely to be hindered by conflicts with America's core values and with the established routines of entrenched bureaucracies.

There is a lesson here for readers who expect too much and become too enthusiastic about appropriating parts of Japanese practices as panaceas for belabored institutions in the U.S. A given set of practices arise from the historical and social evolution of a given society, and these practices cannot be transferred to another social context with any assurance that they will operate in the same way. Westerman and Burfeind make it clear that the structures of Japanese and American society are not radically different. In fact, Japan 'borrowed" many of the models for its criminal justice system from Europe and the U.S. over the last century or so, but Western systems of criminal law and policing were transformed to become more consistent with Japan's unique history and core values.

This partial summary does not do justice to the rich historical content and breadth of analysis of this text. Historical detail is substantial and provides a perspective for the main theses of the text without becoming tedious. The scope of analysis includes most of the main topics and concepts of an introductory course in crime and justice. The only notable exception is that the authors chose to focus on index-type crimes and limit the discussion of white-collar crime because this focus fits the purposes of their analysis. However, Crime and Justice in Two Societies is broad enough to be the main text for an introductory criminology course, and it is certainly valuable as a supplementary text.

Because this book has a macro-sociological perspective, the characterizations of both Japanese and American societies may be criticized as overdrawn. This is especially a problem because it feeds into a Western ethnocentrism that perceives the Japanese people as a monolithic collectivity. To counter this, there has been an increase in the literature which has challenged views that individualism and creativity are rare in Japan (Miyanaga, 1991), that Japan is homogeneous and classless, and that individuals have little difficulty with conformity (Hamabata, 1990; Kondo, 1990). This problem of perspective is unavoidable: The closer one gets to Japanese society, the more details one discovers that do not fit the generalizations necessary for the comparisons in this text.

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In all Crime and Justice should appeal to a wide-range of readers who are unlikely to be bored if they have any interest in the topic. I strongly recommend this provocative and stimulating book.

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Miyanaga, Kuniko. 1991. The Creative Edge: Emerging Individualism in Japan. New Brunswick, NJ.: Transaction Books.

Kathleen A. Tiemann
University of North Dakota

Most texts and readers available for use in social problems class take an objectivist perspective to study social problems. In short, this commonsense approach presents social problems as harmful objective conditions. However, this causes us to ignore the fact that "our sense of what is a social problem is inevitably subjective (Best 1989, p.xvi). But this reader is not like most readers. Best presents social problems from the constructionist perspective. He and the other twelve authors whose work is presented in this book present social problems as social constructions. They remind us that the identification of any social problem is subjective. Thus we are lead to ask who constructs social problems? Why are they constructed? Who stands to gain from them?

Best provides a useful introduction to Images of Issues in which he describes and critiques the objectivist and the constructionist paradigms. He further distinguishes between strict and contextual constructionists. Thus, the introduction provides a solid foundation from which to explore the thirteen cases studies in this book.

This lively book is divided into four parts. Each is preceded by a brief introduction which clarifies the larger theme. The first part focuses on the content of claims and on the role of the press in presenting them. These case studies focus on child abuse, missing children, AIDS, and elder abuse.

Part two examines claims-makers. Claims-makers tend to be those who stand to benefit if their claims-making is successful. Members of this group typically include victims, pressure groups (i.e. parents) and professionals (i.e. educators,

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politicians and physicians). The case studies in this unit examine the social construction of learning disabilities, infertility and the run-away crack problem.

The third section of Images of Issues focuses on claims-making cycles. As Best notes in the introduction to this section, "the notion of claims-making cycles suggests that the natural histories of social problems do not always lead to the problem's resolution. Instead of disappearing, some problems lie dormant, waiting for new claims-makers to bring them back to life" (1989, p. 139). Best's assertion is neatly supported by cases studies of popular music, smoking and drunk driving.

The theme of the last section of this book is policies. As Best notes, the fact that we refer to social problems is significant in that problems always imply solutions. The entries on wife abuse, urine testing and Mexican immigration are used to illustrate how policies are used to "solve" social problems. As becomes clear with these entries, policies themselves are problematic.

The reader ends with a useful afterword section. Here Best reminds the reader that the articles in this book reflect diverse assumptions about the constructionist perspective and how it should be used. The ongoing debate within constructionism is outlined and criticisms of this paradigm are presented. Best also gives the reader a guide to using the constructionist perspective for the "would-be claims-maker and would-be social analyst" (1989, p. 249).

This reader is appropriate for use in both graduate and undergraduate courses. The range of topics guarantees that most students will encounter a case study that strikes close to home. Students are surprised by the misleading and inaccurate claims that are routinely presented as "facts" by claims-makers. As a result, they are less willing to look at social problems as objective conditions. Instead, they cast a more critical eye toward the claims they encounter. After reading this book, students are ready to take on the challenge of being social analysts.

The Age of Infomzation by Stephen Saxby. New York: New York University Press, 1991. 322 pp. $40.00 (Cloth)

Jon Flanagin
University of South Dakota

This book is unusual. Rather than yet another "Gee whiz!" look into the uncharted future of information technology (which almost inevitably turns out to be wrong), The Age of Information is a sober, sometimes nearly pedantic, look at how we got this far (this far being mid-1990, when the book was delivered to the publisher). This is a serious attempt to detail and

contextualize the events that have led us to the brink of what the author understands as pervasive changes in society.

The book's six chapters each deal with some aspect of the fundamental change that Saxby argues flows from the ability to present what have previously been considered radically different kinds of information and/or data in a common digital format. Pictures, words, numbers, data, information, ideas, music, etc., have all traditionally been considered as separate and essentially incompatible sources; our new-found ability to compress all these and more into a single stream changes each, and gives us the capability to integrate and manipulate them in heretofore unknown ways.

To begin, Saxby considers exactly what this information is that can now be stored, processed, transmitted and accessed electronically; for example, he draws an extremely fruitful distinction between "data" and "information", in this context. The key in this introductory chapter is the way the value of information changes when society becomes an information society. Using sources ranging from Galileo to Stephen Hawking, ideas, theories and concepts about information are explored, and the changing nature of information through time is traced.

In the next two chapters the author considers in detail the historical steps that led us to the age of information and (more importantly) the outcomes and implications of those historical events. The real meat of the book--and its value--lies in the serious attempt to understand the implications of what has happened from many different perspectives, and to consider what it all means in terms of the future, not only in technological terms, but philosophically as well. The author is a British lawyer; although this combination sometimes results in some unfamiliar grammatical constructions and spelling, it also strengthens the book with a broader perspective than that which a disciplinary specialist would bring to the subject.

These two chapters address previous information technology "revolutions" and the evolution of the new technologies that have made possible the age of information. They include an excellent explication of how the technology works (in lay terms), how it fits together to enhance its power, how the industry that is producing it is structured, and what the future holds. Rapid technological change, deeply declining costs, and the convergence of the computer and telecommunications industries (the themes of this section) are shown to combine to create the configuration that ushers in the age of information.

Historical background in place, Saxby then turns to the significance of the current information technology, the emergence of the computer software industry, and the global transition in telecommunications. This segment of the book--roughly the final third--comes closest to the "gee whiz" treatment, but with a twist: the surprise is not in what the future holds, but rather in how fast we have come so far. And, when the changes are aggregateed

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(and thoroughly documented) as they are here, that treatment does not seem out of place, for the changes truly are profound.

With extensive footnotes, references to original sources, and a comprehensive bibliography, this book serves as an excellent introduction for students...or as a springboard for your own gee whiz' musings about what the future holds.

Breaking Chains: Social Movements and Collective Action. Comparative Urban and Community Research, Vol.3. Edited by Michael Peter Smith, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications, 1991. $19.95 paper.

Geoffrey Grant
South Dakota State University

"The Comparative Urban and Community Research is an annual review devoted to theoretical, empirical, and applied research on the processes of urbanization and community change throughout the world" (p. 2). This volume is a collection of eight chapters written by different authors with an able introduction by the editor. The first three chapters are a theoretical discussion on the articulation of social structure, class, community and their impact on social change. The fourth chapter focuses on housing, and the fifth on politics. The sixth and seventh chapters are comparative, focusing on urban social movements in Mexico and political change in Korean cities. The last chapter deals with national and international economic impacts on urban American race relations. Each chapter is meant to stand alone; thus the volume is not an integrated whole. But the essays all focus on some aspect of urbanization or community organization. Each is more than journal article length, but less than monograph length.

In his essay, Sidney Plotkin investigates the idea of community as rooted 'enclave consciousness," which he suggests emerges from feelings of conflict with powerful social forces outside the community. There has been a shift from a focus on solidarity, the old radical's rallying cause, to contemporary Western radicalism's focus on community. This shift is fraught with political and moral difficulties, as community can suggest feelings of separateness from the larger society, fears of encirclement, and anxieties about connections with a hostile world. Plotkin goes on to analyze the nature of localism embodied in a focus on community in the institutions of law, ideology and economics. He concludes that the community-based movements reflect traditions of stratification and alienation of the past.

Joseph Kling and Prudence Posner also focus on the roots of community and suggest that it is in conflict with Marxian notions of class. The authors suggest that the role of class structures "...shape the grievances

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that working people experience and disguise the larger social and economic interest that they share" (p. 27). They review the debate between the new populism's focus on citizenship participation and the new Marxist focus on class-based analysis. Castells (1983) is cited as pointing to three goals in late capitalism: collective consumption, community solidarity and citizen action. The authors conclude a lengthy discussion of the new populism by suggesting that people must be organized and that existing levels of class consciousness can not stand in the way of that organization.

Carl Boggs postulates a continuity between 1960s radicalism and contemporary social movements. Reviewing Whalen and Flacks (1989), Boggs points out that the themes of the 1960s new left have been carried forward in modern ecology, feminism, peace movements, and urban protest movements. Contemporary social movements have been able to articulate coherent theory and durable organization, showing increased maturity over past social movements and creating greater diversity of current movements and issues. Boggs shows how obsolete the global solutions of the 'left' are for community movements.

Michael Harloe attempts to understand how governments respond to rising housing needs. He analyzes the history of governments' social policy concerning needed housing, using examples from the Netherlands, Denmark, Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. He concludes that the U.S. was little influenced in its housing policies by World War I, but Europe could not return to laissez-faire pre-war policies as the working class had demon- strated its revolutionary potential with the Russian Revolution. Under the present conditions where growth in unmet housing needs is in a population which is marginal to the labor market and poses little significant political or social threat, governments can afford to ignore the need for housing.

Susan and Norman Fainstein investigate the political and ideological context underlying community activism. They find that the conditions stimulating urban social movements of the 1960s have largely disappeared. Community activism now focuses more on interest groups than on global political ideals. In investigating interest groups' activism (including race and ethnicity, client status, and neighborhood) New York City is compared to Chicago and Boston in terms of support from mayors' offices toward community demands. The future success of city electoral politics to be integrated with community group interests rests on the ability of the mayors' campaigns. This is more likely in some cities than others.

Diane Davis charts recent political developments in urban Mexico. She makes the argument that rapid urbanization has resulted in increased class conflict, state incapacity, declining legitimacy and political crisis for Mexico's ruling party. This is seen as occurring because of popular and middle class dissatisfaction. Since the ruling party is structured to meet the demands of organized labor and industrial capital rather than urban needs, community organizations often bypass formal state structures to form social movements.

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This weakens the Mexican one-party ruling system. Davis uses post World War II historical analysis to show why contemporary urban political systems serve some needs while ignoring others.

David Smith and Su-Hoon Lee examine the movement of the past decade toward political liberalization in South Korea. The authors point to Korean "semiperipheral status" (using Wallerstein's term) and the consequence this has on internal politics and class structure. The paradox is that Korea has been successful in the world market because of low labor costs, but labor has demanded a rising standard of living and increased power in democratic political institutions. The authors suggest that the future for Korea is uncertain as countervailing political forces may lead to outward conflict and a falling competitive position in the world market, or they may be able to work out a compromise allowing Korea to follow the Japanese model of economic prosperity.

In the last chapter Gregory Squires investigates the issue of class and race in American cities but puts the discussion in the world systems perspective, tying the economic difficulties of inner city black Americans to shifts in the world economy. He suggests that for urban policy to be effective it must address changes in the political economy which allows for democratic participation in economic institutions through the mechanism of employee ownership of business. He sees the intractable nature of race relations as rooted in deindustrialization of the nation's urban core and the flight of capital to the suburbs, the Sunbelt states, and beyond. This loss of capital has lead to continued racial inequality. Employee ownership would reduce disparities associated with race if these policies are be accompanied by democratic control, and not just as a bailout solution to a failed business. This is seen as one part of a broader solution involving affirmative action and civil rights enforcement.

This little volume (218 pages) largely achieves the goals it sets itself in reviewing comparative urban and community research of recent years. Readers can gain insight into urban and community social movements and collective action. In terms of shortcomings the volume is limited by its format, which focuses on specific essays rather than reviewing the entire field. The volume also suffers from uneven writing, as might be expected from a book with eight different sets of authors. Anyone interested in the topic of community activism should find interesting material here. Bibliographies included with each chapter are extensive and should provide readers the most important references on the topic. This would be an excellent addition to a graduate level community or urban seminar.

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Military Organizations, Complex Machines: Modernization in the U.S. Armed Se,vices by Chris C. Demchak. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991. 203 pp. NFL.

Harlowe G. Hatle University of South Dakota

Demchak adds to the tradition of researchers such as Marx, Woodward, Thompson, Hall and others who analyze organizations based on their connection to the technology being employed. Demchak, however, differs from the earlier theorists by emphasizing the effect of the 'complex machine' as machine per se rather than macro level accommodations to modes of productions society wide (Marx), or micro level accommodations to organiza- tion structure based on technology employed (Woodward).

Demchak studies the development of the M1 ABRAMS battle tank in the mid-1970s. She shows the development of the tank, which, on completion, was to increase military capability and strength while also reducing both operations and support personnel through more effective use of technology. She also demonstrates that neither goal was achieved.

Her analysis does not lend itself to predictable and recommended modifications for increased organizational efficiency. While she argues that complexity in critical machines increases organizational complexity and that more complex organizations will have greater problems, she notes that the presence of 'unknowable unknowns" result in "rogue outcomes" which cannot be predicted, and indeed may be incapable of solution. Complex machines and their attendant systems multiply the probabilities that rogue outcomes will occur. The military's assumption of "Smart Machine-Dumb Maintainer," with its built-in automatic test equipment supplemented with a 'remove and replace the black box" maintenance philosophy, merely increases the probability of rogue outcomes and decreases operation reliability. Demchak's book is another in the list of publications that shows the attempt to remove organizational "dysfunctions" by replacing the variable imperfect human with the predictable perfect machine does not always--nor even usually--give the desired result; 'nasty surprises" are more likely the result. Demchak efforts will be best appreciated by readers who have an interest in both complex organizations and the military.

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Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America by Richard D. Alba. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990. 347 pp. NPL

Terry E. Huffman *Northern State University*

Ethnicity is as much a process as it is a product. Although social scientists may verbally admit this reality, their work often treats ethnicity as a static phenomenon. Nevertheless, the fluidity of ethnicity has received notable attention from such scholars as Herbert Gans (symbolic ethnicity," 1979) and Stanford Lyman and William Douglas (ethnicity as "impression management," 1973). Taking a symbolic ethnicity theoretical conception, Richard Alba addresses the changing role of ethnicity in the lives of white Americans.

In this much needed work on the dynamics of white ethnicity, Alba's central thesis is that ethnicity among American whites is "in the midst of a fundamental transformation' (p.3). Specifically, the author argues that the once prominent ethnic distinctions based on European ancestry have become less important and are fading into the social background. However, while this has occurred, other ethnic distinctions (those based upon race) have emerged. The result is the forming of a "new ethnic group" based on ancestry from anywhere in Europe.

The bulk of Ethnic Identity (chapters 2-7) reports the author's research on the impact of ethnicity on the personal lives of a sample of white Americans. This sample, taken from the Albany-Schenectady-Troy metropolitan area of New York, included 524 randomly selected subjects who participated in in-depth interviews. By all accounts this was an ambitious and carefully conducted social scientific research project. The researcher sought to reveal how notions of ethnicity have influenced aspects of social life including preferences in food, friends, organizational memberships, prejudice, knowledge of ancestral ethnic heritage, even children's sense of and interest in ethnic identity.

The findings indicate the social boundaries separating white ethnic groups are disappearing and, perhaps more importantly, life chances among different groups once based on ethnicity seem to have been leveled. Alba states, "The objective changes among whites can be traced in terms of the convergence of life chances in education and employment and the decline of cultural indicators such as language, but the most compelling evidence of change is undoubtedly the great extent and ease of intermarriage" (p.291).

Alba concludes that ethnicity among the subjects is largely symbolic and includes only the most minor cultural traditions, which, it might be added, involve few everyday personal costs to the subjects. "The nature of the most common ethnic experiences seems to fit with the social milieus in which most whites find themselves, which involve continual contact among persons of

varied ethnic ancestries.... In general, the common ethnic experiences are unlikely to generate conflict with people of other backgrounds and, in most cases, are capable of being shared across ethnic lines. This seems true for the most frequently cited experiences of eating ethnic foods, discussing one's ethnic background with others, feeling curious about the backgrounds of others, and attending ethnic festivals. These are mainly experiences in private rather than public realms; they are innocuous, unlikely to give offense or even attract negative comment.... (p. 297).

This reviewer was bothered by the author's use of the terms ethnicity and race interchangeably. In fact, throughout the book Alba does not seem to place much importance to notions of race at all. He seems reluctant to call the 'transformation" among whites what it may well be--the rise in racial consciousness and solidarity resulting from a greater racial polarization in the United States. It is only at the end of the book that the author hints at this possibility "...the United States remains a society in which social boundaries drawn on the basis of ethnic ancestry--and I include race under this heading-- remain of paramount importance; indeed, the prominence of ethnicity as a boundary may be increasing as a result of the surge of immigration from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean since 1965, which has imparted new vitality to some older ethnic groups (pp. 311-312).

By not recognizing the basic difference between ethnicity and race, the author fails to tease out the full implications of his own findings. In short, the decline in notions of ethnic differences among whites have corresponded with increased racial solidarity. Given recent events in Los Angeles, among other places, this phenomenon deserves more than passing note.

One of the strengths of Alba's work is that it offers empirical confirmation to what many already have as a visceral understanding. That is, many social scientists have assumed for some time now that ethnicity is a less salient part of personal identity for many white Americans and Alba's research findings are consistent with those assumptions. Furthermore, Ethnic Identity is thoroughly researched and well written. Although readers may find the report of the findings tedious (a large segment of the book), the theoretical implications are well worth the effort.

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Sacred Cows and Hot Potatoes: Agrarian Myths in Agricultural Policy by William P. Browne, Jerry R. Skees, Louis E. Swanson, Paul B. Thompson, and Laurian J. Unnevehr. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992. 151 pp. *$38.95* cloth; *$15.95* paper.

Thomas   C.   Langham
Our Lady of the Lake University

How do agrarian myths shape American agricultural policy? William P. Browne, a professor of political science and director of a public administraant tion program, and his colleagues explore this question. They argue that most Americans know agriculture only through the filter of longstanding myths rooted especially in the ideas of Thomas Jefferson and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Jefferson gave rise to the myth that farmers acting in their own personal interest bring about public good. Emerson added that farmers are models for morally successful lives due to their close ties to nature. But these ideas that assert the goodness of farmers, the authors correctly observe, are so broad that those who wish to use them for selfish gain may easily do so. The result is that special interests use these myths to shape agricultural policy for their own selfish personal gain.

While the Jeffersonian and Emersonian myths about the goodness of farming have long shaped agriculture, the body of this book is spent detailing the myths that shape present-day agriculture. Among the most disastrous of these myths, according to the authors, is that farm policy is rural policy. This myth has proved particularly troublesome in thwarting the pursuit of appropriate rural development strategies. Another damaging myth has been that American farmers can operate independently of the world economy. American farmers, especially in the last decade, have felt the negative consequences of this notion. An additional myth that deserves special mention is the belief that good farming will result in a healthy environment. When used unwisely, the growing application of technology, mechanization and chemicals has revealed itself as hazardous to both people and the earth. Other myths are also shattered throughout this book: e.g., there is an average farm for which policy can be developed; farm price supports stabilize farm income; production and productivity are synonymous; farm programs are food programs; and government farm programs will achieve what they claim. These myths, the authors charge, have combined to wreak havoc not only on farming but also on rural areas.

No one can disagree with Browne and his colleagues that a body of myths with adverse consequences has grown up around American agriculture. Nor can anyone argue with their assertions that special interests have fostered these myths for their benefit. What do the authors suggest be done? Their solution, a reformist response, essentially involves three elements. First, every person, not only farmers, must be a 'self-reliant steward of democracy"   (p.

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141). Second, agrarian myths must be "rebunked" (rehabilitated) so that they can help Americans understand agricultural issues. And, third, policy makers must insist that those who advocate maintaining the status quo in agriculture be held to the same standards as those who call for change.   Several questions emerge in regard to such a solution. Why have Americans not been "self-reliant stewards of democracy?" What is the possibility that agrarian myths can be (or even should be) "rebunked?" Should anyone really expect that those who control agriculture will justify that control? The reforms offered in this book should be greeted with great skepticism. If such reforms are truly workable, why have they not already emerged from the system? The solution offered here is one that cannot work.Why? Because voluntary "do-gooder" actions cannot alter the direction of the system anymore than individuals can affect the consequences of gravity.

The bankruptcy of this book's solution reveals flaws in its very premise that the problem is one of misapplication of values stemming from the agrarian myths of Jefferson or Emerson. The values cited in the book are not the cause of the problems in agricultural policy, but merely symptoms of structural problems rooted in the American capitalist political economy. The authors seem to understand that Emerson was wrong at least some of the time in his assertion that the close ties of farmers to nature result in morality, They do acknowledge that farmers despoil and degrade farm land. But they do not seem as quick to acknowledge the logical inconsistencies of Jefferson's principle that seeking private interest will result in public benefit, an idea borrowed from Scottish Enlightenment philosopher Bernard Mandeville's The Fable of the Bees (1723) and developed to its logical economic conclusion in Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations (1776). Pursuing private interest often fails to bring about public benefit. Instead, seeking private interest results in selfish money-grubbing behavior that has brought today's agricultural policy, Is this the mythical social center of gravity that Americans want to shape their values and agricultural policies? The values contained in this myth, serving as an opaque rationalization for the political-economic structural arrangements in American agriculture and giving license for a few to take advantage of the many, should be discarded rather than "rebunked.'

The crux of the matter is that the myths that Browne and his colleagues wish to resuscitate cannot rejuvenate agriculture. This is a dangerous book when it suggests that they can. Rehabilitation of the Jeffersonian and Emersonian myths will only result in agricultural America continuing to swirl in the mire in which it is presently trapped. The old myths must be transcended and replaced with new ones that are rooted in a collective political-economic vision. The authors of this book need to come to terms with this reality, one that cuts to the structural reasons of why American agriculture is not working instead of offering reforms that can lead only to more of the same. While it is well

written and does point out many of the problems facing contemporary American agriculture, the   book   unfortunately

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fails to reveal an understanding of the causes of the problems it highlights. Because of this critical flaw, it should be restricted to use in graduate courses involving rural policy issues, where its weaknesses can be criticized and used as a guide to formulate a workable policy solution for America and its agriculture.

Soviet Society Under Perestroika by David Lane. London: Unwin Hyman, 1990. xv+401 pp. $44.95 paper.

Patricia Ann Wasely Lomire *Minot State University*

     The scholarly interest in the Gorbachev era is evident by the plethora of books and journal articles written on the post-1985 reforms in the social, political-legal, and economic realms of the former Soviet Union. A review of this vast literature suggests that the goal of many authors is to evaluate the image of the former Soviet Union as benign or malevolent, or to offer positive or negative predictions about the future (pp. 2-6). Consequently, commentators tend to dichotomize these works into two categories that include the optimists who feel that Gorbachev has successfully implemented dramatic change, and the pessimists who argue that social conditions are in such a devastated state that no reform is likely to succeed. In Soviet Society Under Perestroika, David Lane has been characterized as carrying the optimistic British tradition to an extreme. However, upon closer inspection, Lane's sociological approach tends to focus primarily on description and explanation, and secondly, on evaluation and prediction. Herein lies the pedagogical value of this sociology textbook.

     One of the primary advantages of Lane's conceptualization of restructuring is that he is one of the few authors who attempts to clearly provide a comprehensive framework outlining Gorbachev's reform strategy. Lane identifies 1) uskorenie—acceleration or rapid growth in the economy--as a primary policy goal; 2) perestroika—restructuring or radical reform--as a method of change; 3) glasnost-public criticism, democratization and pluralism, law and control, and khozraschet--economic accountability and independence... as various mobilization strategies used to achieve the goal of uskorenie. The advantage of this model is that it clearly illustrates the significant role of perestroika and glasnost within a more comprehensive framework of goals and strategies proposed by Gorbachev (Chapter 1).

     Another advantage of Lane's text includes his coverage of social problems such as housing, alcoholism, drug addiction, health care, welfare, generational change, and the youth culture. He includes chapters devoted to the topics of Nationalities and Ethnic Relations" and "Reproducing Society:

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Gender, Family, and Generations". From an instructional standpoint, these two chapters are valuable in illustrating the way in which Lane's sociological perspective attempts to explain the association between broad social forces and interpersonal relation. Readers will also find that the tables and charts (total of 77) provide valuable data for critical classroom discussion. For example, Lane provides figures on major nationalities, ethnic educational enrollment, feminized sectors of employment, family size by nationality, political generations, life expectancy, and infant mortality.

The shortcomings of this text do not differ considerably from other works on the former Soviet Union. Events are moving so quickly in the institutional sectors that even assiduous researchers and prompt publishers cannot publicize these changes at a pace that would adequately reflect the consequences of restructuring. For example, Lane suggests that multiple suppressed groups will eventually unify and that "the growth of autonomous groupings and the strengthening of civil society will lead to the rise of a more articulate and organized opposition" to the outmoded party structure (p. 85). Although this prediction may be theoretically feasible, recent political events, such as ethnic conflict in Thilisi, Georgia have not supported Lane's prediction. Nevertheless, it may be necessary for instructors to supplement Lane's work with reviews of current-event articles derived from more recent sources.

Although the book would have benefitted greatly by a concluding afterward, both instructors and students will certainly be stimulated to develop their own afterward" following an intense reading of this well balanced and erudite work. Lane is to be commended for his clear and concise writing and well-supported grounding for his analysis. His work can be viewed by both instructors and students as a valuable contribution to the sociological literature. Lane is also the author of Political Power and Elites in the USSR (1988) and Soviet Labor and the Ethic of Communism (1987). His work is based on efforts to collaborate with members of the Soviet academic community through repeated visits to the former Soviet Union (1957-1990).

In the final analysis, Lane's insights, experiences, and sociological perspectives all contribute to making this book a major prerequisite for scholars who are developing research on the comprehensive changes occurring in the former Soviet Union. Soviet Society under Perestroika provides researchers with the missing conceptual links to the puzzle of the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States.

A Case for the Case Study edited by Joe R. Feagin, Anthony M. Orum, and Gideon Sjoberg. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991. 278 pp. $37.00 cloth; $12.95 paper.

Janet   Kelly   Moen
Universizy of North Dakota

Sitting down with a methods text was not my idea of the best way to begin my summer reading program. Thus, I was pleasantly surprised when I could hardly put this book down. Not only is it interesting and readable, but for an edited volume, it has a surprising level of cohesion and thematic consistency. Add to that the delivery of the jacket promise that this book is a "feisty manifesto" and you have all the makings of a best seller--well, for methods buffs, at least.

In the process of making a strong case for greater use of qualitative methods, particularly the case study, the editors explicate the theory/metho5 connection. Though their critique of "the Sociological positivism of the profession's current elite" may appear overzealous it provides a lively framework for the discussion of major methodological issues in modern social science. These issues are summarized as several fundamental lessons which are engaged through case study research. These include the grounding of observations and concepts in natural settings, holism, the importance of process and social change, and the utility of the case study in theoretical innovation.

The selection of substantive areas of specialization to illustrate case study work is comprehensive, although such editorial choices are bound to offend some area specialists by the omission of certain conceptual areas. Those areas which are included add up to a comprehensive overview of many of the classic works of sociology, and provide a spirited introduction to research questions explored by sociologists over much of the past century. The topics include community and urban studies, homelessness, religion, criminology, and family and gender research. While their offerings are somewhat uneven in quality, the authors are recognized in their fields, and relate the classic case studies to the methodological issues which are the focus of this book. The strongest chapter, the section on gender by Christine L. Williams, provides a provocative feminist critique of quantitative methods.

This book could be used in a graduate methods class as one of several texts, or it could be used as a main text in a qualitative research methods course on the undergraduate level. I would even consider using it in a introductory course to get students involved in the issues of the research enterprise while exposing them to an overview of many of the classic works of sociology. Whatever the level, the text is sure to generate some controversy.

A Case for the Case Study is not a timid text. It is well organized, comprehensive, and generally well-reasoned Moreover, the authors provide

some wonderful insights into the research process, as well as exposing readers to lively content in a number of areas of specialization in sociological inquiry.

A Statistical Package (ASP). Grand Blanc, MI: DMC Software. 70.00 software; 29.99 user's manual; 29.95 student copy.

Teresa Stallings

Minot State University

ASP is an ambitious effort to make a wide variety of statistical routines easily available on personal computers. It is quite reasonably priced, with a site license available if one wishes to use it as a class aid.

The software is easy to install and requires a minimum of computer resources. It can be run on any IBM-compatible computer, using DOS 2.0 or higher, and having at least 512K of memory. ASP does not need to be installed or configured for any particular monitor or printer combination, and is capable of utilizing a math coprocessor. Further, while the DOS 640K barrier limits the maximum numbers ASP can manipulate to approximately 5000, it has the capacity to make use of expanded, extended, and virtual memory, increasing the maximum to approximately 10,000 numbers.

While ASP can be used on a computer with only one floppy drive (provided the drive has the capacity to hold both the program software and data files), the program works more effectively on computers with two disk drives: one for the program disk, the other for data disk. The optimal use is to copy the program into a subdirectory on a hard drive and to create data files in another subdirectory, either on the hard drive or on a floppy disk.

To facilitate use, ASP's statistical and data management routines are completely menu driven. Statistical routines, directly accessible through the main menu, include analysis of variance, regression analysis, correlation matrices, summary statistics, probability distributions, time series analysis, hypothesis tests, factor analysis, miscellaneous plots, and crosstab and contingency table analysis. An auxiliary menu makes available additional routines for solving linear equations, inverting matrices and finding their determinants, solving depreciation problems, solving linear programming problems, and performing interest analysis.

Using the data management routines, accessible through an alternate menu, data can be retrieved, edited, recoded, transformed, and saved in various formats (such ASCII). Prompts ask where the data is to be saved, allowing the user the alternative of storing data on a floppy disk or in a subdirectory other than that containing the ASP programs.

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It is with the data management portion of the ASP package that I have some concerns. While global changes (mass changes to a particular variable) are possible through the "recode variable" facility, full screen editing is not possible. Selective editing must be done either case by case, variable by variable, or by using specific "case numbers' obtained from a listing of the relevant ASP file. This makes editing large data files cumbersome.

Therefore,with large data files, one may want to bypass the ASP editor altogether by saving the file in ASCII format and then inputting into an alternate editor with full screen editing capabilities. Unfortunately, in saving the data in ASCII, ASP converts all data field lengths to the maximum field length and inserts a space between the fields, greatly increasing the ASCII file size and editing difficultly. Once again, it is important to note that editing with ASP becomes cumbersome only with lengthy files.

I must also say that I have not been able to understand the "combine variable' data management option. Neither reading the manual, nor playing with the software cleared up this lack of understanding. I think that giving problem examples in which this and other program options might be used would greatly enhance the understandability of the user's manual.

Other than these few criticisms of the data management portion of the package and user's guide, I find ASP to be quite impressive. It does a lot with great ease of use at a small cost. A wide variety of statistical and data manipulation options are available, requiring minimal computer resources and user knowledge. I especially find the extensive data transformation capabilities impressive. Also impressive is the ease and speed with which one can move from one routine to another. Further, data recoding is simple and can be done using flexible criteria. Extreme values are handled using easily understood exponential notation and output is displayed in an understandable format, and can be output to a printer, an ASCII file, or to the screen. A "pop-up" calculator is available for quickly solving simple math problems.

In practical terms, statistics students find ASP to be a good learning tool, relieving them of tedious calculations. I fmd it useful in analyzing fairly small sets of data, relieving me of having to submit a mainframe computer job or to dedicate a large portion of my personal computer's hard drive to use a statistical package. I think one can fmd many uses both in and out of the classroom for the ASP package.

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Creating SociologicalAwareness by Anseim Strauss. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991. NFL.

Joy   M.   Query
North   *Dakota*   *State*   *University*
University of North Dakota School of Medicine

This book is a worthwhile collection of 27 articles and chapters by a leading symbolic interactionist theorist and his co-authors, covering a period of over thirty years of productive scholarship. There is one minor flaw which is almost implicit in such a collection, that some of the material can appear to be very outdated. Strauss was aware of this, however, when he made his chapter selections, and he states in his preface that it was not descriptive materials but conceptual actions which he deemed important. In this sense, the book is a masterly collection of readings showing the theoretical growth of a social psychologist whose work is deeply rooted in that grounded theory which he helped so much to legitimize.

The readings are presented in ten major areas, including: I) Interaction; II) Work; III) Trajectory; IV) Negotiation; V) Social Worlds; VI) Collective Images and Symbolic Representations; VII) Identity; VIII) Body and Biography; IX) Policy; X) Method, Consultation, and Teaching. I found these sections a little contrived and would have preferred a dated sequence in order to more easily follow the author's theoretical and methodological development over time. In addition, the author did not reedit any of the chapters, so there is inevitably some repetition. If, however, one wanted to read only one topical chapter, this would be an advantage.

The book has some special qualities upon which it will be worthwhile to comment. First, Chapter One, "The Chicago Tradition's Ongoing Theory of Action/Interaction," is the most cogent summary of the Sociological Theory of Action which this reviewer has ever read. It should be a "must" reading for every graduate student in sociology.

Further, some chapters are exciting reminders of Strauss' phenomenal influence. Much of Strauss' sociological vocabulary has entered into the vernacular; for instance, his work on illness trajectory and negotiated order have become widely used concepts. The reader will also recognize how much his work and that of his colleagues has helped modify medical practice. The chapter on "Closed Awareness" (1965 With Barney Glaser) is happily much less true than when it was written, perhaps because it became rather standard fare in the pre-clinical years of medical education. In fact, Strauss helped re-define the order of things in medical practice, especially in the areas of chronic illness and death and dying. Nothing is said of this in this book, but the reader is warmed by this knowledge. On a less cheerful note "Medical Ghettos" (1968) and "Images of Immigration and Ethnicity" (1961) remain as pertinent today as when they were written.

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Finally, the last three chapters on Method, Consultation, and Teaching, all written since 1987, are a wonderfully refreshing look at teaching, research, and grounded theory. The book is a testament to the impact of the Chicago Tradition on contemporary scholarly thought in the social and behavioral sciences.

The Everyday World As Problematic: A Feminist Sociology by Dorothy E. Smith. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1987.244 pp. paper. NFL.

B.   Diane   Miller
University of North Dakota

Dorothy Smith's feminist sociology has both emotional appeal and theoretical content to stimulate the sociological reader. The book, a collection of earlier essays, varies in its writing style and demands much concentration by the reader, including some difficult passages that need further clarification.

The book is organized into four parts, written over a period of ten years, preceded by a long introduction. The first part sets the stage, starting with a review of the progression of feminist thinking and awareness to recent times while explaining Smith's term relations of ruling" as encountered in a male dominated world. Particular attention is paid to the way this masculine dominance is manifest in text. Smith particularly decries the false objectivity of traditional "masculine' created sociology texts which 'exclude the presence and experience of particular subjectivities" (page 2). The second and third sections describe the type of sociology Dorothy Smith is calling for in her essays. Section two contains two chapters examining the "relations of ruling" through sociology of "a feminist mode of inquiry from women's experience and women's standpoint" (page 10). The third section details examples of the methodology Smith intends. Here she defines sociology as "a systematically developed knowledge of society and social relations" (page 105). The final part returns to "Textual Politics" and relates the three preceding parts of the book.

At times I felt I was reading a literary work with the emotional impact of Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, at other times I felt I was struggling with the theoretical concepts of a C. Wright Mills discussing the "sociological imagination." The strongest emotional impact, on me and several other reviewers, from The Everyday World as Problematic is Smith's description of her "bifurcated consciousness" experienced as a divorced mother of two small children and a graduate student in sociology. She succeeds in creating an awareness of the different levels of intellectual functioning necessary for a person with both family and career responsibilities and values. She is not quite successful in creating the conviction with me that the "bifurcated consciousness" she describes is exclusively   the   domain   of   women.   This   seems

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to me to be a re-description of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's 'spheres of reality." Although Smith's examples of methodology have many penetrating insights, she fails to make it clear why her theory and methodology represent a feminist sociology. In a few paragraphs in the book, she even allows that this type of sociology might not be strictly feminist. Smith wants to combine macro and micro sociology while criticizing the academic sociological "inner circle' for their elitist masculine viewpoint. How this combination of macro and micro sociology is to be accomplished, she never makes clear, but I feel Smith is one of the feminist sociologists to whom we owe a debt for examining the pretense of objectivity within sociology.

Dorothy E. Smith's work is critiqued in the Spring 1992, issue of Sociological Theory. Three interpretations of her work that I found equally credible are contributed along with her reply. Charles Lemert describes Smith's work as "standpoint' sociology, starting with actual subjective experience and working outward to examine the interaction with the larger social sphere. Patricia Hill Collins describes Smith's work as attacking the "inner circle" of sociological theorists as a "challenge to transform sociological theory." R. W. Connell focuses on the Marxist influences in Smith's work fmding this aspect of her work not convincingly exclusively feminist. Smith explains that what she is really calling for is a sociological "map" of how society and social structures really work. A laudable and useful goal, but mapping ever changing 'territory' will be difficult because this kind of "map" must combine many levels of interaction and many viewpoints of reality. New symbols and tools will need to be created for this purpose. Smith has yet to do this with her work, but anyone interested in creating a practical sociology, that is a useful guide for the less privileged, should read this book.

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Waiting: The Whites of South Africa by Vincent Crapanzano. Vintage, 1986.

Rita Kolle

University of North Dakota

Vincent Crapanzano's book, Waiting: The Whites of South Africa, provides a disturbing glimpse of what life is like in a racist society. He provides this glimpse by allowing the white people of a rural South African village to speak for themselves. This is what makes the South African reality come alive; it robs the reader of the comfort inherent in just hearing news stories about the problems "over there," and confronts them with real people. Prior to reading this book I was much more comfortable; it was far too easy to conceptualize the atrocities which occur in South Africa as though they were an account out of a history book, rather than a reality in which people must live out their lives. Crapanzano's book also opened the door to the awareness that this is not just a far off problem; racism, apartheid even, still exists in the United States.

The way this book is written allows white readers to get close enough to recognize similarities between these South Africans and themselves. This recognition is made possible, but it is not at all automatic. The author himself, writing from the perspective of a white anthropologist, does not emphasize the connection. He does acknowledge that the reading of this book should include self-reflection. He reports one man's angry comment that Americans see in South Africa their own underbelly. And he admits to resenting the observations and analogies that the white South Africans are so quick to make; while admitting that there is some truth to them. But Crapanzano only goes so far as to suggest that in our investigation of others we also have the moral mission of investigating our own possibilities. I believe it must be acknowledged that there are many situations, and many people in America, for which the evils of racism are much more than a possibility.

Crapanzano's method of story-telling accentuates the whites' stifled, limited experience. The characters--the people of Wyndal-- tell animated stories about their past, but their present seems static and flat. Crapanzano clearly depicts the lack of growth and potency which is characteristic of South African life. This is the problem with "waiting." It has robbed the people of their future; they experience not only trapped helplessness, but also the realization that eventually their world may completely close in on them. A seeming sense of doom appears to overshadow their lives. So they wait for something, anything, to happen. They know that when it does their lives shall be dramatically altered, and not knowing exactly how it will occur creates even greater anxiety and dread. This state of existence, being part of a group which is tenaciously clinging to a system of cruel domination, is largely devoid of vitality; and for the dominant group, of humanity. As Crapanzano states, the

apartheid system has placed the white South Africans in a position of powerlessness and vulnerability *in regards* to their future. So they seek refuge through rationalizing self-

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descriptions and glorification of the past, while being robbed of vibrant living in the present. Crapanzano explores this often ignored aspect of systems of domination; the system itself can become the true dominating force. The entire book is revealing of the fact that once such a system of institutional domination is created it can become an all-consuming, self-perpetuating monster. This appears to be the case in South Africa, where it has grown and matured to the point that there are many well-defined layers in the social hierarchy, all seeming to experience aversion toward the others, and helplessly trapping participants in their position.

Though Americans may prefer to present their country as the land of freedom and equality, there remains countless manifestations of racism. Many of which strongly resemble apartheid--in the homogeneous Midwest, the ethnic neighborhoods of the inner cities, and the concentrations of minorities in prisons, low paying jobs, and lower quality educational institutions Separateness and oppression, with their counterparts of racial hatred, violence, and ignorant beliefs about racial inferiority, remain an American reality.

This is one of the greatest strengths of the book. It forces us to take a look at these people, who--from our distant world-- we incriminate as monsters, and to realize that although their world may be quite different from ours, it is more a matter of degree than of kind. Apartheid and racism are supported by the laws in South Africa, while here they are not, yet there is no denying that racism does exist in America, hand-in-hand with de facto apartheid.

There is also the question of responsibility. All whites, as members of the dominant group, do benefit from racism, whether they actively participate or not. Passivity, an attempt to claim that "since I'm not racist, it's not my problem", supports racism just by doing nothing. As I came to an awareness of my own position within an unjust system it allowed me to empathize with the entrapment of the white South Africans. I feel overwhelmed and helpless in the face of the realities of racism here in this country, which are relatively mild when compared to their distorted world.

By acknowledging such parallels between the United States and South Africa I am not suggesting that the reader should completely identify with the situation, and thereby excuse the South Africans for its realities. And this is most certainly not Crapauzano's intention. As he notes, the South Africans are quick to draw such easy parallels, listening intently for stories of racial violence and hatred in other countries. They seem to be both grasping at justification and trying to turn attention away from themselves.

In order to hold on to this position, it seems necessary to maintain an impersonal distance, either through some lack of knowledge, or a determined belief that "we' are very different from "they." Waiting" removes much of this

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possibility by drawing the reader in close, to look at the real lives of real people, who aren't so very different. This builds most of the bridge to understanding. The other necessary element must be provided by the reader, and that is some degree of openness and willingness to examine oneself.

Opening the doors to true understanding, including self-awareness, though one of the most powerful elements of the book, is also one of the more subtle. What this book more blatantly drives home is the grimness of the situation--its sobering and horrifying reality. For non-whites, and also for whites. Though the reader never truly meets any of the people of color, he or she will become very aware of how completely they are oppressed, and of what a long and bloody battle they have ahead of them. The reader is exposed to the depth of ignorant racism which exists in South Africa. For me, its extent was virtually incomprehensible. Just a few of the injustices for the people of color include being dictated where they can live and go. They live in extreme poverty, receive a grossly inadequate education, and are overworked, underpaid, and often mistreated as employees. Also, they receive little to no protection against murder or rape by whites; in fact it is law enforcement officers who are often the killers. And of course they are stereotyped, their identity reduced to their color.

It seems that even if one can come to terms with recognizing some similarities between the elements of racism in this country and in South Africa, the complete sovereignty which apartheid has in South Africa will remain slightly beyond the grasp of comprehension to those who have not experienced it. Even after we are shown how it has been institutionalized, and how it is taught from birth as a main element of a child's socialization, it is difficult to believe it is true. The horror of the saturation of racism and oppression into the lives of both the whites and non-whites, and the tragedies evoked by it, are staggering. And it seems to be overwhelming for the white South Africans themselves, who employ a wide variety of methods in order to protect their self-concept from it.

"Waiting" presents varying attitudes and levels of racism among the whites of South Africa, and the effects of racism on all aspects of life. This book accomplishes two very important objectives: exposing the tragic, damaging effects of oppression on those at all levels within the system, and reflecting enough light on racism that we can see into our own persistent darkness. The reader can hardly help but be left with a sadness and anger that humans so persistently crave power, and thereby create systems so powerful that they, too, become trapped in them.

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