


Migrant Narratives and Ethnographic Tropes: Navigating Tragedy, Creating Possibilities

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography
2016, Vol. 45(6) 631–644
© The Author(s) 2016
Reprints and permissions:
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/08912416166652193
jce.sagepub.com


Susan Bibler Coutin¹ and Erica Vogel²

Abstract

Tragic stories of border crossings are often central to accounts of migration, and as ethnographers we are privy to stories of clandestine crossings, painful separations, and unspeakable loss. In the process of writing, ethnographers make these stories central to their own arguments and in so doing, those crossings, separations, and losses become knowable, imaginable, and part of a larger story of global interconnectedness and inequality. Ethnographers of migration write about those who cross borders, who become stuck within borders, or who are forcibly moved across borders because of deportation. Ethnographers thus position themselves at the crossroads of being activists, storytellers, and academics, even as they also locate their informants' narratives along trajectories of tragedy and possibility.

Keywords

ethnography, narrative, migration, hardship, possibility

At the 2011 American Anthropological Association, one of us—Susan Coutin—presented an article about the hardships experienced by Salvadoran migrants who had grown up in the United States but who were subsequently

¹Social Ecology, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA, USA

²Anthropology, Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, CA, USA

Corresponding Author:

Susan Bibler Coutin, Social Ecology, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697-7080, USA.

Email: scoutin@uci.edu

deported to El Salvador. The article argued that territorial demarcations were muddied by the ways that deported youth sought to maintain an almost ghostly presence in the landscapes from which they had been removed (Coutin 2013; see also Zilberg 2004, 2011). To make this point, the article focused on experiences of deportees such as Lorenzo Gomez (pseudonym), who entered the United States in 1978 at the age of eight, gained lawful permanent residency, but retroactively became deportable due to a felony drug conviction. By 2008, following multiple deportations and four years in prison for unlawful reentry, Lorenzo was living in the streets in El Salvador, desperate to rejoin his parents, siblings, and children in the United States, and bewildered at the course his life had taken. As he told Coutin, “I don’t understand why this happened to me! Why? Why? Why?” Somewhat surprisingly, the discussant for the session at which Lorenzo’s experience was recounted focused on the presentation’s emotional content, commenting that the article was full of “heart-wrenching tales.” This comment—and similar ones that we have heard on other occasions about ethnographic material providing “human stories” or “accounts of suffering”—raises troubling questions for all ethnographers, but particularly those focusing on migration. When redeploying narratives of suffering as part of ethnographic accounts, are ethnographers unwittingly being manipulative, attempting to shock or move listeners? Are they deliberately (and legitimately) seeking to illuminate the emotional experiences of legal phenomena? Are they echoing legal advocates who emphasize suffering as part of legal claims (Ticktin 2011)? Alternatively, have theoretical commitments to analyzing power relationships led ethnographers to use hardship narratives to debunk dominant political rationales for exclusionary policies? And, when ethnographers emphasize hope and possibility in the face of overwhelming deprivation, are they responding more to theoretical trends or political commitments than to ethnographic realities? What accounts for the different stances that scholars take toward the all-too-often bleak circumstances that migrants—and many others—encounter?

We investigate these themes by bringing together articles in a special issue that explores how migrants and ethnographers cross borders between nations, communities, and social realities. Tragic stories of border crossings are often central to accounts of migration, and as ethnographers we are privy to stories, such as Lorenzo’s, of clandestine crossings, painful separations, and unspeakable loss. In the process of writing, ethnographers make these stories central to their own arguments and in so doing, those crossings, separations, and losses become knowable, imaginable, and part of a larger story of global interconnectedness and inequality. Ethnographers of migration write about those who cross borders, who become stuck within borders, or who are forcibly moved across borders because of deportation. Ethnographers thus position

themselves at the crossroads of being activists, storytellers, and academics, even as they also locate their informants' narratives along trajectories of tragedy and possibility. Ethnographic subjects are therefore also legal/political subjects: for example, through ethnography, Lorenzo becomes both the subject of an ethnographic account of deportation and a legal subject who was contesting the political rationale for his deportation. This doubling of subjects as both ethnographic and legal/political potentially imbues ethnography with particular sorts of justice claims, even as ethnography also creates other possible subjectivities and thus other locations for ethical practice.

Tragedy and Possibility

Several theoretical trends in the social sciences have focused ethnographic attention on suffering and oppression, on the one hand, and on possibility, on the other. Critical approaches such as Marxism, feminism, and critical race theory, which became influential in the 1970s and 1980s, led ethnographers to document, analyze, and denounce power relations that produce subjugation and marginalization (e.g., Mintz 1985; Rosaldo, Lamphere, and Bamberger 1974; Williams 1989; Wolf 1982). These approaches used concepts such as hegemony (Gramsci 1971) to suggest that popular culture sustains inequitable relationships by depicting hierarchies as natural and therefore legitimate. Ethnographers and other scholars have sought to debunk such understandings in order to contribute to more accurate accounts of social reality and to raise readers' consciousnesses (Bourgois 1995). Within sociolegal scholarship, this effort to debunk popular "myths" of law (Calavita 2010; Kairys 1998) has taken the form of "gap studies" that show how law-in-action often falls short of the promise of law-on-the-books (Gould and Barclay 2012). Poststructural approaches have directed scholars' attention to the ways that individuals are constituted as subjects within systems of power that are diffuse within society (Foucault 1977). Relatedly, ethnographers who have been influenced by notions of governmentality examine the ways that numerous social relationships (e.g., parent/child, teacher/student, social worker/client, doctor/patient) are characterized by a micropolitics of power that leads individuals to internalize norms and thus govern themselves (Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde 2006). Attention to social suffering and structural violence have likewise suggested that even when there is not a clear agent of repression, individuals can still be victimized (Kleinman, Das, and Lock 1997; Farmer 2004). Ethnographers drawing on these approaches are inclined to look for and document hardship, sometimes producing tragic narratives—accounts that emphasize suffering and that elicit sorrow—as a result.

These approaches that examine how people are trapped within systems of power have been complemented by work that focuses on structural indeterminacy and the degree to which individuals have agency. A key text in this regard is James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak* (1985). Based on ethnographic research in Indonesia, Scott documents the forms of "everyday resistance" practiced by peasants who make fun of landowners, swipe goods, sabotage equipment, and otherwise challenge the socially powerful. These everyday practices, Scott argues, demonstrate that peasants are not quiescent in their oppression nor do they suffer from false consciousness, as Marxist approaches might contend. Rather, these workers actively challenge authorities, however, they do so in ways that do not usually take the form of organized rebellion and that therefore may be unrecognized by scholars who have certain preconceived understandings of what resistance is like. Closely related to work on agency and everyday resistance are ethnographies that attend to the voices of marginalized individuals. A key example is Ruth Behar's *Translated Woman* (2003), a life history of Esperanza, a Mexican street peddler. Drawing on Latin American traditions of *testimonio* (Nance 2006), much of this account is presented in Esperanza's own words, which Behar audio-recorded over numerous visits and then translated into English. While Esperanza's story contains numerous instances of violence—such as being beaten by her husband—this rich narrative also details Esperanza's efforts to shape her own life. In fact, even her decision to seek out Behar, befriend her, and become her *comadre*, was an example of assertiveness. Ethnographies that highlight agency, everyday resistance, and the voices of those who are marginalized locate possibility even in the midst of suffering.

According to anthropologist Carol Greenhouse (2011), ethnography itself can be a way to speak back to systems of power and therefore can intrinsically be a way of uncovering possibility. By reading across genres of law, ethnography, and fiction, Greenhouse argues that ethnographic studies that highlighted collective self-definitions and political struggles around identity within U.S. communities were a means for ethnographers to challenge understandings of the social that became dominant during the 1990s. During this period, legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Welfare Reform, and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act moved away from earlier legal understandings (e.g., *Brown v. Board of Education*) that had considered social analysis to be a means of discerning collective rights. With this shift, race and disadvantage were legally defined as personal attributes, outside the realm of legal remedy. Importantly, this redefinition was accomplished using the language of civil rights, such that protections designed to overcome socially inflicted racial disadvantage came to be seen as forms of racial discrimination. In the process, culture,

previously the particular domain of anthropologists and ethnographers, was redefined as pathological, while (racially coded) female-headed households were condemned for producing welfare recipients and a criminal underclass. The ethnographer's gaze was redirected home, at the neighborhoods, entities, and subjects produced through this redefinition, giving rise to a rich and relatively new anthropology of the United States. Indeed, Greenhouse argues, social description was itself a political act.

More recently, theoretical shifts that have been termed "the ontological turn" have, according to some, decentered power relations and social critique in favor of an analysis of "being" and "becoming." In a special issue of *Cultural Anthropology* devoted to "The Politics of Ontology," Holbraad, Pedersen, and Viveiros de Castro define the ontological turn as "a technology of description designed in the optimist (non-skeptical) hope of making the *otherwise* visible by experimenting with the conceptual affordances present in a given body of ethnographic materials" (2013, citations omitted, emphasis added). This focus on alterity ("the otherwise") emphasizes the openings, possibilities, and unfoldings that are created through radical forms of difference that implicitly challenge commonsense Western understandings of reality, life, and being. Thus, ethnographers may explore nonhuman agency (Latour 1999), alternative understandings of life developed by marine biologists who experience the ocean's depths (Helmreich 2009), or the perspectivism practiced by Amazonians whose understandings of being (e.g., prey, predator, human) suggest that "all beings see things in the same way . . . but, crucially, what they see in this same way is a different world" (Kohn 2015, 318; Viveiros de Castro 1998). The ontological turn reformulates political questions around the possibility of existence in the Anthropocene world while also examining "being in a human sense . . . and its becoming under adverse conditions" (Kohn 2015, 313; Biehl 2013). Thus, the ontological turn encourages ethnographers to focus on possibility and life, even in dire circumstances (Deleuze and Guattari 1988; see also Coleman, this issue).

These diverse theoretical trends, which propel emphases on suffering, possibility, or both, create dilemmas for ethnographers whose interlocutors experience hardship. What are the ethics of representing extreme suffering ethnographically? Does uncovering possibility limit or further critical analysis? What stories do ethnographers choose to tell and why? These dilemmas are particularly sharp within ethnographic accounts of migration.

Migrant Doubles

The dynamics that have compelled ethnographers to examine suffering, high-light agency, speak back to power, and explore possibility play out within

ethnographic accounts of migration as well. Ethnographies cannot be removed from the broader power dynamics within which they occur, nor can ethnographic depictions be separated from broader debates over immigration. As a result, ethnographers who study migration are likely to encounter tales of hardship, and to discover that there are high stakes in how ethnographers choose to redeploy these tales ethnographically. Hardship is linked to assessments of migrants' legitimacy, to the national claims that undergird enforcement policies, and to the spatial and temporal dimensions of movement and stasis. Ethnographic accounts can double as political arguments, even as migrants themselves double as ethnographic and legal subjects.

The centrality of hardship claims to assessments of migrants' legitimacy is borne out by a community presentation on immigration law that one of us recently witnessed in Los Angeles. The attorney giving the talk told his audience—mostly individuals who were undocumented or who had some sort of immigration case—that there are three basic ways that immigrants can gain legal status in the United States: through “blood,” a kin relationship to a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident relative; “sweat,” labor or employment; or “tears,” arguing that deportation or removal would be a hardship. As nations divide migrants between those who demonstrate worthiness of being included, recognized and forgiven, and those who do not, migrants who lack the money or prestige that would qualify them for a visa may have to meet burdens of hardship. These burdens arise in multiple contexts. For example, migrants may be invited to give testimonies at churches (Vogel, this issue), or may have to present evidence of hardship in order to qualify for a legal remedy (Gomberg-Muñoz, this issue). Similarly, in ethnographic accounts of immigration, narratives of hardship can serve to document human experience, humanize categories of persons, and reveal seemingly exceptional or less-well-known circumstances and milieus. At the same time, both legal and ethnographic accounts may be complicit in systems that make suffering a prerequisite for sympathetic treatment.

Yet, while narratives of hardship can make border crossings possible—as in the above example of “tears” enabling unauthorized migrants to cross the border between illegality and legality—national narratives of hardship are also key to the construction of borders in ways that buttress enforcement activities. Labor-receiving nations, such as the United States or Korea, construct global narratives wherein they are powerful yet benevolent nations that can either defend or open their borders in response to sending nations that are experiencing hardship (Gomberg-Muñoz, Vogel, this issue). Such depictions imply that sending countries' hardship is the result of their own errors or simply of fate, instead of recognizing the degree to which all countries are part of a system in which one nation's economic success can come at the

expense of another. Likewise, the United States constructs itself as a nation that is suffering hardship at the hands of immigrants who are accused of causing harm by taking public benefits, threatening U.S. culture, or committing crimes (Dowling and Inda 2013; Chavez 2008; see also Zilberg, this issue). Such narratives of national hardship are cited to justify the increased border militarization and international enforcement collaborations that Zilberg, borrowing from Hugh Gusterson (2001), has termed a security-scape (Zilberg 2011). Ethnographic accounts that highlight migrants' hardships disrupt such national narratives by arguing that states themselves *cause* hardship (De León 2015), even as ethnographic depictions of agency and potentiality reveal the gaps and wiggle-room that prevent control from being totalizing.

Ethnographic accounts of migration also highlight the ways that temporal and spatial movement and stasis create hardship. There are ways that ethnography itself mirrors migration in that lengthy "immersion" in a particular social context is considered key to ethnographic research. At the same time, ethnographers often have greater ability to move legally than do the migrants about whom they write. And, the ways that migrants do move changes them, as time passes, such that there are senses in which they can never go "home" again. Ethnographers have also been attentive to the ways that legal assessments of deservingness entail complex and contradictory temporal calculations. Laws can either privilege or punish those who have remained within a country without authorization. Thus, the United States imposes a ten-year ban on those who have been in the United States without authorization for one year or more, but also takes the time that a migrant has spent with his or her U.S. spouse into account in assessing the hardship that separation would impose (Gomberg-Muñoz, this issue). Likewise, in Korea, lengthy presence within the country can lead migrants to claim that they belong there, even though it does not give them grounds for filing an immigration claim (Vogel, this issue). And, the passage of time can either aid or entrap migrants. For example, on the one hand, lengthy periods of residence can enable migrants to show that they are productive and deserving, but on the other hand, subjecting their lives to legal scrutiny can lead past events to be reinterpreted in ways that jeopardize their abilities to remain in the country, as in the case of Alex Sanchez, discussed in Zilberg (this issue). The passage of time can also obscure or illuminate details of migrants' experiences—and sometimes in ways that create ambiguities that reverberate within ethnographies as well (Cabot, Coleman, and Vogel, this issue).

Such ambiguities suggest that when ethnographers encounter tales of hardship, instead of being quick to use these to denounce systems of power or to celebrate potentiality, it is important to linger and listen to the ways that migrants' past experiences and journeys are constantly invoked in the present

to project the future. Space and time are thus embedded in the opportunities that migration creates and forecloses, the maps that migrants create of where they have been and the places they seek to go or to avoid, and in the ways that the liminality that characterizes both migration and ethnographic practice can create hardship or defer it to another moment. Appearance and disappearance can be strategies employed by migrants, who may seek to document and yet hide their presence, and ethnographers, who can amplify or hide their own authority (Clifford and Marcus 1986).

Reflections on a Ghostly Ethnography

Each of the articles presented in this special issue describes ethnographies that take place within security-scapes (Zilberg 2011, drawing on Gusterson 2001), whether created through fear of crime, deportation policies, gang suppression tactics, the impossibility of securing documents or the scrutiny to which asylum seekers are subjected. These security-scapes give ethnography a “ghostly” quality, in that the fields within which ethnographers work are linked to other fields from which migrants have been absented, whether through law, distance, or in some cases, violence. Collectively, these articles make two key points about migrants’ journeys across these security-scapes. First, authors note multiple insufficiencies of walls, borders, boundaries, and identity documents. Not only do subjects traverse such barriers, but additionally, the spaces that such boundaries separate are themselves “muddied,” as enforcement practices and anxiety about the “other” pervade the exterior and interior. Walls do not stay put, but rather expand, move, or even disappear (Rosas 2006). Second, our contributors contend that despite such expansion, there *is* a space outside or beyond order. This is a space of abjectivity, but also, authors suggest, of creative potential. Vogel writes that the space of those who cannot obtain documentation and who are therefore permanently temporary is one where “people make unexpected choices and plans precisely because they have no other choice” (p. 676). This space may also be where gang peace activists, such as Alex Sanchez, can do the transformative work that is not permitted by prison and deportation regimes (Zilberg, this issue). And it may be the space where Coleman (this issue) suggests that desires, including the erotic, may be realized.

Yet, though they draw attention to its generative possibilities, our contributors do not idealize this abject space. Coleman notes that the space “beyond” is located in relation to the ordered space of the interior. Coleman’s paper takes up the case of Sonu, a young rural-to-urban migrant whose mysterious night out on the town provokes negative reactions from the Mehta household where he works and lives. Coleman suggests that as an

ethnographer, he faced a choice between interpreting Sonu's story in terms of possibility (mobility, desire) or discipline (Mr. Mehta's—a father figure's—disapproval). Yet even this may be a false choice. Is not the father's disapproval partially what makes the outside desirable in the first place? This interdependency is key in Cabot's account of transformation as well. She suggests that tragedy is generative because people exceed that which can be known, and this excess creates new possibilities.

Through their focus on both abjectivity and possibility, each of the ethnographies in this special issue makes contributions to understanding how ethnographers of migration might consider narrating the tragedies encountered during fieldwork. Drawing on her experience conducting fieldwork at a migrant-serving nongovernmental organization in Greece, Cabot explores the parallels between ethnographic work and refugee advocacy. She finds that, paradoxically, both ethnographers and advocates risk silencing refugees even as they try to give them space to speak. This paradox arises because “giving voice” to migrants entails repurposing migrants' tragedies (and images) within ethnographers' and advocates' own narratives about social reality or injustice. Within these repurposed narratives, migrants turn into “ghosts,” sometimes literally, as in a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees poster, with the title “there are ghosts around us,” or through Cabot's own experience trying to trace the whereabouts of Smira, a Somali girl who rejected NGO assistance that would have required her to move into a refugee camp. Cabot argues that ethnographers can ameliorate this representational challenge through humility: an acceptance that ethnographers might not be able to “know” everything about their interlocutors. She concludes that ethnographic “experiments in representation are increasingly accompanied by claims to access voices ‘exactly’ through critical attempts to stand outside and undermine the knowledge worlds that marginalize those voices. Ethnographers, like advocates, fall persistently under the spell of their own creations. . . . I want us to remember how knowledge haunts us into forgetting its ghostliness” (p. 667).

The complexities of knowledge production are also at issue in Elana Zilberg's account of her involvement in the case of Alex Sanchez, a gang violence prevention worker and community leader who was accused of being a “shot-caller” for the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) gang, and of orchestrating a murder. During her fieldwork, Zilberg was witness to a moment when a photograph that became a key piece of evidence in the case was taken. As a result, she was involved in this case in multiple capacities, as advocate, anthropologist, and activist, roles that “both limit and enable what can and cannot be said” (p. 720) Zilberg details the contrasts between the qualified answers that ethnography usually provides, and the clear-cut yes/no answers

fetishized through legal proceedings. Of this multiplicity, she writes, “All three actors—anthropologist, advocate and activist—bear the weight of the image’s interpretation. Each interpretation is contaminated by the other and in relation to a fourth—the (de)legitimation work of the state” (p. 733). Echoing Cabot’s call for humility, Zilberg advocates collaborative approaches, arguing that ethnographers “can only critically engage but not solve these contradictions, and so anthropologists should align their interests and investigations with their interlocutors” (p. 733).

Coleman also examines the limits of and ambiguities within ethnographic knowledge. Writing about fieldwork in Delhi, India, he explores an incident that contributed significantly to his own understanding of the borders faced by migrant workers, but whose meaning to participants never became clear. The incident involved Sonu, the rural-to-urban migrant mentioned above, who was a worker in the household where Coleman was staying. One evening, Sonu went out into the city and apparently committed some sort of indiscretion, which led him to be further marginalized within the household. Coleman argues that much recent ethnography interprets the lives of tragic figures, such as migrants, through a vitalist lens, namely, one that focuses on “possibility and ongoingness.” Coleman instead contends that figures like Sonu, whose narratives are incomplete, are actually better understood as having to contend with countless symbolic and tangible barriers that form in their homes, cities, and between urban and rural areas. Critiquing the vitalist tendency to celebrate possibility, Coleman writes, “This is in the nature of ethnographic truth: it only emerges in a context, however various and open that may be, and as often consists in identifying endings, ruptures, and limits, as it does in following the trajectory of a becoming” (p. 711)

In the case of Erica Vogel’s contribution, the context in which ethnographic truth emerges is quite broad: migration between Peru and Korea. Her analysis of migrant narratives focuses on the failed romance of a Peruvian migrant in South Korea and considers the ways migrants tell even the most devastating stories with a sense of possibility. She finds that love stories come to constitute an important part the global experience for her interlocutors who, due to an inability to regularize their status, are “permanently temporary” in Korea. By projecting themselves as part of transnational love stories, Peruvian migrants in Korea both express a sense of temporary permanence, and also assert cosmopolitan identities according where they are something more than economic migrants. She finds that both migrants and ethnographers gain a sense of identity through the telling and retelling of narratives that involve both loss and possibility. By making these multidimensional narratives indelible through publication or public testimony, both

migrants and ethnographers also contribute to the temporary permanence of relationships that may no longer exist.

Gomberg-Muñoz also examines the ways that migrants' private experiences of hardship are narrated publicly. To do so, she analyzes public statements made by undocumented youth in Chicago, in discussions in a workers' center in Chicago's South Side, and through experiences in an online support forum for women with undocumented spouses. She argues that publicizing hardship stories creates the opportunity for immigrants, ethnographers, and activists to organize migrants, mine their stories for information, and use these accounts to find comfort, create solidarity, and demand positive change for the community. Gomberg-Muñoz points out that sharing others' hardship stories is risky for both migrants and ethnographers, in that stories could be unreliable and that they make immigrants vulnerable to detection or criticism. She suggests that ethnographic research with marginalized communities can compel ethnographers to work with community members to address inequality, promote their authorship over their own stories, and make the benefits of the research relationship more equitable.

The discussions of advocacy, agency, and vitalism (emphasizing life and possibility) that run through the articles in this special issue suggest that the doubling of ethnographic subjects as legal-political subjects is simultaneously a doubling of ethnographers as legal-political advocates. As well, both of these doublings are brought about through intimacy and a shifting of agency between the ethnographer and that which interrupts, demanding a reply (Zilberg, this issue; Fortun 2001). And perhaps in this doubling, ethnographic subjects—and ethnographers?—become “ghosts” who disappear (as in the case of Smira, discussed by Cabot), haunt, possess, and rematerialize within the discourses that give them form. Within ethnographies, subjects appear in narratives, in pictures or images, and in performance. Perhaps the case of Oliver—discussed in Vogel's article—is instructive here. As Vogel recounts, Oliver, a Peruvian immigrant in Korea, married a Russian woman, who then abandoned him, returning to her country with their daughter, thus leaving him married and, due to the complex legalities of this marriage, unable to divorce. Though ethnographers are themselves troubled and disturbed by the subjects that they encounter and become, perhaps they too must realize—as do our contributors—that they are traversing a security-scape, and that, like Oliver, they can neither control nor break the unions they have formed. So perhaps, in such circumstances, complicity is also a form of possibility.

Acknowledgments

The authors are grateful to Charles Edgley and Jeffrey E. Nash for the opportunity to guest edit this special issue, to the anonymous reviewers for all of their

comments, and to the contributors for their wonderful work and for their feedback on this introduction.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

- Behar, Ruth. 2003. *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Biehl, J. 2013. *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bourgois, Philippe. 1995. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cabot, H. 2016. "“Refugee Voices”: Tragedy, Ghosts, and the Anthropology of Not Knowing." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (6): 645–72.
- Calavita, K. 2010. *Invitation to Law and Society: An Introduction to the Study of Real Law*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chavez, L. R. 2008. *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Clifford, J., and G. E. Marcus. 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography: A School of American Research Advanced Seminar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Coleman, L. 2016. "Inside and Outside the House: A Narrative of Mobility and Becoming in Delhi." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (6): 692–715.
- Coutin, S. B. 2013. "Place and Presence within Salvadoran Deportees' Narratives of Removal." *Childhood* 20 (3): 323–36.
- De León, J. 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Deleuze, G., and F. Guattari. 1988. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Dowling, J., and J. Inda, eds. 2013. *Governing Immigration through Crime: A Reader*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Farmer, Paul. 2004. "An Anthropology of Structural Violence." *Current Anthropology* 45 (3): 305–25.
- Fortun, Kim. 2001. *Advocacy after Bhopal: Environmentalism, Disaster and New Global Orders*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Foucault, M. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage.

- Gomberg-Muñoz, R. 2016. "Hardship Politics: The Strategic Sharing of Migration Stories." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (6): 741–64.
- Gould, J. B., and S. Barclay. 2012. "Mind the Gap: The Place of Gap Studies in Sociological Scholarship." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 8:323–35.
- Gramsci, A. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, edited and translated by G. Nowell-Smith, and Q. Hoare. New York: International Publishers.
- Greenhouse, C. J. 2011. *The Paradox of Relevance: Ethnography and Citizenship in the United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Gusterson, H. 2001. "The Virtual Nuclear Weapons Laboratory in the New World Order." *American Ethnologist* 28 (2): 417–37.
- Helmreich, S. 2009. *Alien Ocean: Anthropological Voyages in Microbial Seas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Holbraad, M., M. A. Pedersen, and E. V. de Castro. 2014. "The Politics of Ontology: Anthropological Positions." Theorizing the Contemporary. *Cultural Anthropology*, January 13, 2014. <http://culanth.org/fieldsights/462-the-politics-of-ontology-anthropological-positions>.
- Kairys, D. 1998. *The Politics of Law: A Progressive Critique*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kleinman, A., V. Das, and M. M. Lock, eds. 1997. *Social Suffering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kohn, Eduardo. 2015. "Anthropology of Ontologies." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44:311–27.
- Latour, B. 1999. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mintz, S. W. 1985. *Sweetness and Power*. New York: Viking.
- Nance, Kimberly A. 2006. *Can Literature Promote Justice? Trauma Narrative and Social Action in Latin American Testimonio*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Rosaldo, M. Z., and L. Lamphere, eds. 1974. *Woman, Culture, and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Rosas, G. 2006. "The Thickening Borderlands: Diffused Exceptionality and 'Immigrant' Social Struggles during the 'War on Terror.'" *Cultural Dynamics* 18 (3): 335–49.
- Rose, N., P. O'Malley, and M. Valverde. 2006. "Governmentality." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 2:83–104.
- Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ticktin, M. I. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Viveiros De Castro, E. 1998. "Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 4 (3): 469–88.
- Vogel, E. 2016. "Ongoing Endings: Migration, Love, and Ethnography." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (6): 673–91.

- Williams, B. F. 1989. "A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation across Ethnic Terrain." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18:401–44.
- Wolf, E. R. 1982. *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Zilberg, E. 2004. "Fools Banished from the Kingdom: Remapping Geographies of Gang Violence between the Americas (Los Angeles and San Salvador)." *American Quarterly* 56 (3): 759–79.
- Zilberg, E. 2011. *Space of Detention: The Making of a Transnational Gang Crisis between Los Angeles and San Salvador*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Zilberg, E. 2016. "Disquieting Complicities: The Double Binds of Anthropology, Advocacy, and Activism." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 45 (6): 716–40.

Author Biographies

Susan Bibler Coutin is professor of Criminology, Law and Society and Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, where she is also associate dean of the Graduate Division. She is the author of *Exiled Home: Salvadoran Transnational Youth in the Aftermath of Violence* (Duke Univ Press, 2016), *Nations of Emigrants: Shifting Boundaries of Citizenship in El Salvador and the United States* (Cornell Univ. Press 2007), *Legalizing Moves: Salvadoran Immigrants' Struggle for U.S. Residency* (Michigan Univ. Press, 2000) and *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the U.S. Sanctuary Movement* (Westview Press 1993).

Erica Vogel is an assistant professor of Anthropology at Saddleback College. Her research focuses on issues of globalization, migration and religious conversion in Latin America and Asia. She is currently completing a book manuscript about her research on the migration of Peruvians to and from South Korea.