Bent Flyvbjerg, a Danish Professor of Planning, has written a thought-provoking book. There are not many social scientists today who would attempt to integrate the disparate insights of Foucault and Aristotle, Habermas and Nietzsche, Bourdieu and Machiavelli, let alone boldly deploy this fashioned synthesis in a critique against a prevailing positivism that still seeks to replicate the nomothetic achievements of the natural sciences. Part One of Flyvbjerg’s book (“Why social science has failed as science”) lays out a case against the naturalist project. Part Two (“How social science can matter again”) presents the rudiments of a reformed disciplinary practice, grounded in the Greek philosophical concept of *phronēsis*, ‘practical wisdom.’ The ambitions are salutary, and the analytical problems addressed are pressing and formidable. If the limited page count testifies to the impressionistic quality of the engagement, a stimulus to critical reflection nonetheless remains.

Flyvbjerg opens with a cursory review of the so-called “Science Wars,” wherein he couples two highly publicized incidents: the Sokal “hoax” that scandalously exposed the epistemic vulnerabilities of various forms of postmodernist posturing, and the skeptical derision that greeted the NORC funded project *Sex in America: A De/bullet5 nitive Survey* (1994). An inference is drawn: social inquiry cannot “measure up” if it is called to account by the theoretical and methodological standards of physics or chemistry. The quest for universal laws and the rampant quantification of social life is misguided and diversionary, and fails to register the distinctive forms of creative human praxis that impart a dynamic, dialectical directionality to our variegated struggles over values, meanings, and power. Flyvbjerg seeks to underpin his reformist project by drawing upon the stage model of learning and intelligence that has been developed by Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus, the key point to which is that advances in human performance – passing from novice to expert – are marked by subordinating a rules-bound regimentation to a reflexive agency that is context-sensitive, and features holistic, synchronic interpretations of, and responses to, the ongoing flow of situational circumstance. Invoking Bourdieu’s observation that “practice has a logic which is not that of logic,” along
with Giddens and Garfinkel on the constitution of agents as knowledgable and skilled self-reflecting performers, Flyvbjerg concludes that the analytical drive for nomological deductivism carries us away from the fundamental realities of social life, which turn on “an open-ended, contingent relation between contexts and actions and interpretations” (p. 43). The decontextualizing logic of a nomothetic social science would be appropriate only if social actors were mere automatons, or “novices” perpetually tied to the procedural rules of early socialization and training. But such “behaviorist” stability and uniformity does not hold, for as human agents develop their social skills and gain experiential facility, their actions become increasingly flexible, tactical, and historically informed as opposed to mechanically reiterative. Given that “context counts,” and counts decisively in the “improvisational art” that is social action, our theories and methods must be developed in accordance with that immensely complicating, yet potentially liberating fact.

In calling for a social science that “can matter again,” Flyvbjerg urges a renewed focus on issues of social values and power relations. Endorsing Bourdieu’s conception of sociology as a form of “fieldwork in philosophy,” Flyvbjerg maintains that we have a need and a responsibility to “make moral debate a part of public life” and “to develop society’s value-rationality vis-à-vis its scientific and technical rationality.” Hence the advocacy for a phronetic social science, i.e., an Aristotelian “practical science” that examines phenomena that are variable in time and place, and which require informed deliberation over “what is good and advantageous” for human existence. At the core of this enterprise are the following four value-rational questions: Where are we going? Is this desirable? What should be done? Who gains and who loses? While conceding that there is no “unified we” that can be presumed as the object of these questions, Flyvbjerg insists that by exposing the partially veiled violence and inequities that underpin established institutional arrangements and discourses (here he draws inspiration from Foucault), a phronetic social science can, “by encouraging and facilitating reflexivity” (p. 64), contribute positively to the ongoing dialogue that sometimes leads, but usually follows, our collective ventures in world-building. Instructively, Flyvbjerg includes a synopsis of his earlier field-project on the contested making of urban policy in his hometown of Aalborg, Denmark, and the subject of his earlier book, *Rationality and Power: Democracy in Practice* (1998). What is of salience here is that Flyvbjerg’s social science entered into the local fray: first by identifying the partisan interests that subverted the reformist agenda voted upon by the citizenry, and secondly, by presenting that research in various public fora, which allowed for the formation of progressive alliances and the emergence of a dialogical rationality that, in due course, expedited a more democratic process. Readers will await with interest the results of Flyvbjerg’s current research, which seeks to extend the reach of phronesis to the global level of grand mega-projects. One suspects he will find the state bureaucracies and transnational corporations that are involved a bit less responsive to the dialogue he will be urging!

In terms of methodology, Flyvbjerg espouses a judicious mix of qualitative and quantitative techniques, but he holds that case studies and narrative accounts will
generally prove more reliable in tracking and explicating the actions of skilled agents. Unfortunately, his explicit “guidelines” for a phronēsis-based social science (in chapter 9) tend to be more hortatory than instructive: “focus on values;” “place power at the core of the analysis;” “get close to reality;” “focus on minutiae;” “look at practices before discourses;” “study cases and contexts;” and “join agency with structure.” These broad injunctions are not always sustained by the requisite methodological rigor or philosophical incisiveness. Consider the following statement: “Narratology, understood as the question of ‘how best to get an honest story honestly told,’ is more important than epistemology or ontology” (p. 137). How the latter two foundational concerns can be considered in any way “secondary” here is difficult to comprehend, for surely the verisimilitude of any narrative must be assessed in terms of its epistemic cogency and its ontological realism? Similarly, in the section defending the focus on social values, Flyvbjerg insists that phronetic researchers will be able to avoid the pitfalls of relativism by focussing on the “common view among a specific reference group,” thus upholding “contextualism” or “situational ethics” (a distinction that might prove confusing to most philosophers, who typically subsume both of these notions under the relativist rubric). Flyvbjerg’s reasoning? It is “the socially and historically conditioned context – and not the rational and universal grounding which is desired by certain philosophers, but which is not yet achieved – that constitutes the most effective bulwark against relativism and nihilism” (p. 130). This is carelessly expressed, for such a claim could – despite Flyvbjerg’s avowed political commitments – easily bring comfort to the “common views” of racists, imperialists, and other such groups, seeing as it provides no basis for critically evaluating any particular worldview or morality. If “our sociality and history is the only foundation we have,” how can the existent – i.e., the “situational ethics” of any particular time, place, or group – be rationally criticized in the light of the possible or the desirable? Unlike Aristotle, the original source of his inspiration, Flyvbjerg has not grounded his call to phronēsis in an articulated ethical and social philosophy of the human condition.

A closing concern: there are presumably few among us who would reject the challenge or the hope of “contributing to society’s capacity for value-rational deliberation and action” (p. 167). After all, the “applied” and “critical” social science camps are in agreement that this is one of their principal, and principled, objectives. The question not addressed concerns the institutional supports for such a venture (the very question Flyvbjerg critically directs against the Habermasian project for communicative rationality and discourse ethics). For in an era of mass media concentration, a growing and active corporate presence on university campuses, and new funding policies that preferentially tie research grants to projects that are serviceable to the “new global economy,” one can only wonder: does phronēsis have a fighting chance?
Book Reviews


Reviewed by Dimitrina Dimitrova
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Ruth Woodfield’s book is a multifaceted yet tightly integrated inquiry into the persistence of gender inequalities. Her ethnographic case study presents a compelling story of what it means to be a woman in the computing industry in the 1990s. She grounds it in the peculiar mix of disappointment and die-hard optimism that constitutes the history of women in this industry. Weaving together her own findings with the existing body of research in the United Kingdom and the United States, she tackles the daunting task of looking into the future.

Yet however important the future of women in a cutting-edge expanding industry, this is not the main contribution of the book. The computing industry is only the storyline, which enables her to explore the reproduction of gender structures at work and in society at large. The computing sector is particularly suited for such a broad multifaceted inquiry in that it has generated successive waves of optimistic assessments of the opportunities for women but has, at the same time, consistently failed to fulfill its promises. The many twists and turns in women’s roles in this industry allows for the exploration of the processes through which occupational skills are identified, recognized, and rewarded; the gender components of occupational culture; the implications of organization context and professionalization for gender relations; and, the relationships between computer technology and gender identity.

The starting point and the storyline around which Woodfield’s inquiry is organized is centered on what she calls the ‘second and third waves of optimism’ in the computing industry. At first, the emerging industry attracted a lot of women but their numbers surged and dropped in the 1980s. This has largely been attributed, as Woodfield’s review of empirical research shows, to the emergence of a specific masculine culture. Economic changes in the late 1980s and 1990s fostered a shift away from the old computing culture and toward qualities traditionally associated with women. These changes were interpreted by many researchers as a break with the dominance of masculine culture and reversal of existing gender relations in the industry; what Woodfield calls ‘the second wave of optimism.’ In addition, a second set of distinct arguments claiming radical changes in gender relations emerged. According to proponents of the so-called ‘third wave
of optimism,’ computers provided a new way of looking at the self (as freed from the persona of the body) and thus reshaped gender identities and inequalities. The first of these claims is what drives the study of work and organizational research. The second has to do with research on technology and the newer area of computer mediated communication. Each of these draws on different strands of radical feminist theory. Taken together, they carve out ample space for investigating an array of important issues in gender relations.

Contrary to the expectations of the ‘second wave of optimism,’ market pressures have not pushed women forward and upward. Women have conventionally been perceived as having a distinct approach – and generally better abilities – towards the management of interpersonal relations, communication, and teamwork. Yet such qualities were taken for granted as “natural” and inborn and their relevance for success disputed. For men and managers, ‘real’ market demanded the reassertion of masculine qualities. The informal organizational culture was thus reminiscent of the old 1980s computing culture. While some of the recent male recruits subscribed to the new ideas, those progressing through the hierarchy emulated the cultural traits of older managers.

This study leaves no grounds for dismissing these findings as atypical and unrepresentative for the industry. To explain her results, Woodfield carefully examined the processes of identifying and ascribing occupational skills. She presents a convincing explanation for the biased skills assessment using Bourdieu’s concept of “habitus”: the disposition and practices, which express and produce hierarchical differences among social groups. Here there is a socio-political component of skills evaluation, distinct from codified technical skills. It is precisely because this component remains unconscious and indeterminate that it becomes an effective strategy for the exclusion of women from core corporate activities and positions.

Further, Woodfield argues that professions with intangible, hard to measure work skills, leave an especially wide scope for the socio-political definition of skills and, hence, for exclusionary practices and discrimination. In situations where measurable skills of different social groups are similar, the symbolic battles over skill definition intensify. These arguments are consistent with research on gender issues at work and studies on occupational skills. Repeated findings of women’s increasingly higher education but less than impressive professional careers, persistent pay and prestige gaps, and low returns on women’s social capital, bear evidence to the same exclusionary processes. Education, or proof of codified skills, cannot offset the socio-political component of skills but simply moves it ‘underground.’ Woodfield’s results are particularly disturbing given the current shift to knowledge-based work, self-employment, and the emphasis on entrepreneurial skills in the corporate world. The intangible intellectual skills and the emphasis on networking and social capital, which such work entails, make women even more vulnerable.

The development of these arguments is, I believe, the most significant contribution of the book. The study bears critical implications for understanding how the organizational context and group strategies can ensure for more
equitable gender relations. For women and other atypical organizational members, Woodfield argues, flexible structures and informal management styles are a drawback. The lack of formal rules for recruitment, assessment, and promotion creates unregulated social spaces, where informal mechanisms revert to common-sense biases and unconscious prejudices. Their unconscious nature masks their very existence while informality precludes opportunities for corrective action. Thus, indeterminacy privileges the members of the dominant group – a surprising lesson for researchers and practitioners alike. Similarly, Woodfield suggests that a viable strategy for redressing gender biases in the definition of skills does not help to preserve but rather eliminates the vagueness of intellectual and social work. Explicating and codifying such skills can make the process of their recognition and ascription transparent. However unusual as an occupational strategy, this suggestion is consistent with some salient themes in gender literature. For instance, women often have no language to describe their work and their skills. This excludes such skills from public discourse and renders them unrecognized and undervalued.

The second major line of the investigation – the potential of computers to disrupt gender identity and its anchorage in the body – leads to similar conclusions. In the structured environment of the organization, it is ‘real life’ gender relations that organize the disembodied electronic universe. If such results can be attributed to the constricting impact of formal structures, research on leisure activities online confirm the persistence of gender identity, the informal sanctions against identity changes, and the need for stability in online identity and communication. In short, there is little evidence to suggest the irrelevance of existing social structures in online activities and the emergence of a postgender society.

Woodfield’s findings are admittedly pessimistic. The ‘second wave of optimism’ signaled a somewhat modified and increasingly subtle gendered system rather than any kind of radical break from it. The implications of the study for knowledge-based work hold little hope for quick social changes. In turn, the claims of the ‘third wave of optimism’ attest more to our fascination with technology rather than its transformative potential. Women, as Jenson (2000) pointed out, ‘confront a moving target.’ Yet disappointment with the persistence of the continuing marginalization of women and the resilience of gender inequalities comes with valuable theoretical and practical lessons, and ‘forewarned is forearmed.’

As only a few excellent case studies manage to do, this book stands out for its thoroughness and excellent integration of diverse arguments and research. Woodfield draws on an extensive body of theoretical and empirical work dispersed within different bodies of research on both sides of the Atlantic. Despite this varied material, Woodfield has succeeded in organizing it consistently so that it bears directly on her argument. This not only augments her findings but makes her book a valuable resource for researchers interested in women, work, and technology. The complexity of the issues and difficulties in their organization detracted only partly from the readability of the text. Apart from this ‘instrumental’ value, the expressive language and clear structure of this book make it a delight to read.
Reference

JENSON, JANE
It is exciting to witness a recent increase in studies of non-western modernity, identity and cultural industries. For too long, moderns outside the West have been considered either in evolutionary terms, as not-yet-like-us, or in pessimistic terms, as dupes of cultural imperialism. If we are to understand what ‘global’ phenomena like media and nation mean in non-ethnocentric terms, these studies will prove indispensable. One place where many scholars start thinking through the question of how to conceive of modernity as multiple and contingent, is India. Two fascinating aspects of contemporary India, the resurgence of Hindu nationalism and popular Hindi cinema, are the topics of these two recent informed studies.

Arvind Rajagopal’s *Politics after Television* presents a detailed interdisciplinary and multi-site analysis of how the media in India, especially the epic TV serial *Ramayana*, contributed to the hegemonic positioning of an exclusivist ‘Hinduness’ (*Hindutva*) in the political sphere. The recent ascendance of Hindu nationalism, as well as the current holders of political power in India, the BJP (the (Indian People’s Party), to a very large extent, follow from the troubled events surrounding the town of Ayodyah in Uttar Pradesh. The Hindu nationalist Ram Janmabhumi movement claimed that Ayodyah’s sixteenth-century mosque was built on the ruins of an ancient Hindu temple marking the birthplace of the god-king Ram. Rajagopal shows that the resulting violent and political events cannot be understood without looking at the cultural conditions in which Hindutva can be asserted and disseminated. He argues that the state television’s broadcasting of the Ramayan provided cultural soil in which the discourse could flourish.

Rajagopal’s Gramscian account becomes more multi-faceted by adding another contextual factor of the rise of Hindutva, namely the calls for economic liberalisation amongst Indian business elites dissatisfied with the Nehruvian brand of state-led development policy. The BJP managed to equate the Congress Party’s
decades-old secular developmental philosophy with stagnation and a failure of consensus. In an intriguing move of hegemonic politics aided by a compelling ‘visual regime’ of circulating Hindu symbolism, the BJP defined itself as the only viable option that simultaneously called for market reform and religious identification.

Rajagopal employs a wealth of sources; his text moves through political history, narratology, audience analysis, public opinion research, even autobiography. After providing a comprehensive overview of the economic and political background for the Hindutva movement, he devotes a chapter to ‘prime time religion.’ Building on Bakthin, he shows how the televisual appropriation of the epic tradition of the Ramayan exhibits certain deeper lying rhetorical strategies. The Indian government effectively, but indirectly, won the consent of the majority for modernisation by way of the immensely popular Ramayan broadcast. But simultaneously, history, nation and progress were redefined as Hindu, thus excluding Muslim, Sikh, Christian, humanist and other possible identifications with India.

While Chapter 4 focuses on the relationship between Hindu nationalism and the press, Chapter 5 highlights the organisational and symbolic dimensions of the Ram Janmabhumi and other important Hindu-nationalist movements (RSS, VHP and BJP). Again, political and cultural analysis blend into each other as he elaborates on the Hindu-nationalist propaganda efforts as contingently following from a specifically Indian context. In Chapter 6, ‘Hindutva goes global,’ Rajagopal widens this context and shows how Hindu nationalism is not confined only to India but has, both organisationally and symbolically, ‘migrated’ to the United States. Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), in a world increasingly interconnected through communication and transport technologies, play an increasingly important role in the imagination of ‘Mother India’: India as proud, modern, and united. As Rajagopal shows, while the ‘elsewhereness’ of the home-country is crucial to all Indian diaspora (p. 241), the assertion of Indianness outside of India depends on the particular context, in this case US racial dynamics. Unfortunately, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 do not have enough to say about the politics of television as such and, therefore, depart somewhat from the scope of the book.

Particularly exciting, however, and still underdeveloped in media studies, is Rajagopal’s claim in Chapter 3 that the power of television lies in its very objecthood, a ‘communicating thing’ physically restructuring domestic space and time. This is a claim that scholars like Joshua Meyrowitz have made before, but their technological determinism prevented them from seeing how the agency of TV in people’s lives is shaped, in turn, by family structures, economic privilege, and prevalent attitudes. In Indian slums, for example, television screens can have an aura of novelty and status regardless of what is shown on them. With cultural and media studies’ obsession with ‘text’ and ‘discourse,’ I would have liked to read more on how the materiality of the TV, as centrally positioned in the living room, decorated, revered and coveted, makes a difference in the dissemination of Hindutva in Indian households.
It is unfortunate that there is no mention in the book, especially in the chapter on diasporic identity, of Bollywood cinema and its thriving international circulation on video. More generally, I also would have been very interested to know what Rajagopal has to say about how satellite television in the 1990s dramatically transformed India’s (urban) cultural landscape and, therefore, patterns of identification. Rajagopal could also have integrated a more careful consideration of the dialectic of the local and the global. It is not just that Hindutva is something local ‘going global;’ as a modern phenomenon importing ideas of nation, progress, culture, etc., Hindutva was always already ‘global.’ Finally, there is far too little on how Hindutva, business elitism and epic Hinduism articulate with India’s gender divisions.

Gender and Bollywood are central to Steve Derné’s Movies, Masculinity and Modernity. With audience studies predominantly studying women, a study showing how patriarchal mechanisms operate through emotion and sociality amongst male audiences is very welcome. Another achievement of Derné’s book is his participant observation of film-going itself; certainly the first such effort in India. He shows how cinema audiences interact with the film screen in India: the shouting and cheering are crucial to the male experience of film. This makes it possible to criticise psychoanalytically inspired film theories such as Laura Mulvey’s. Dervé also includes fan magazines in his analysis of the gendering of Bollywood cinema.

On the whole the film texts themselves receive too much attention at the expense of physical context and actual spectatorship. Dervé’s readings of Hindi films, though often insightful, are then effectively confused with what the ‘mainstream’ of men make of gender and social change in late twentieth-century India. Given that Dervé insufficiently elucidates his own particularity as a white foreigner watching Indians watching Indian films, this conflation is unfortunate. Dervé does, however, elaborate on a quintessential aspect of India’s modernity which Rajagopal merely touches upon: Indian perceptions of the west. Though I am unsure why he chooses to build his argument on a study of wrestlers, Chapter 6 interestingly shows what ambivalent shapes the attitudes of Indian males can take toward what is perceived to be ‘western’ promiscuity. Dervé claims that the tensions and uncertainties regarding the changing positions of men and women in India are partially resolved through the cinematic experience. Following Victor Turner (Chapter 4), Hindi cinema’s escapism, even rebelliousness against the traditional institutions of school, work and family, offers a liminal space in which young males ‘learn’ individualism and heterosexual romance (Chapter 5). Significantly, unlike many other audience studies, Dervé does not celebrate the activity of the audience and, instead, stresses throughout that male dominance in Indian popular culture remains unchallenged.

These two recent books on television and cultural politics in India will be of use to a range of media scholars studying postcolonial societies such as India. With a little more geopolitical understanding of what difference the post-colonial condition of such societies makes, we can finally begin to appreciate the extent to which modern culture outside the west was always an unequal interaction between technologies, audiences, political discourses and sexualities from both
the West and its former colonies. What I mean by this is that Rajagopal and Dervé tend to overlook the degree of both the unevenness and the historical interrelatedness between Western and Indian cultures. In Rajagopal’s case, he shows how Hindutva emerged in India’s particular discursive constellation with its own concepts of nation, development and progress. But he presents this particularity largely as something Indians fabricated internally, as unrelated to the enforcement of British administration and culture (neither ‘colonialism’ or ‘imperialism’ figure appear in the index). In Dervé’s case, while he addresses the issue of Indian perceptions of ‘western’ culture, he has nothing to say about how Bollywood contests American culture’s global hegemony. In terms of the Asian media landscape, this becomes especially significant since the advent of satellite television.

A critical sociology of modernities outside the west, comprising phenomena such as nationalism, mass media, individualism, neoliberalism and the ‘invention of tradition,’ cannot bypass the double question of how these modernities were, from the start, implicated by European colonialism, and how they now cope with a subordinate position in the political, economic and cultural geographies of the world. While Rajagopal and Dervé can clearly not be accused of omitting questions which were, after all, peripheral to their books’ objectives, it is the very peripheral status of such critical geohistorical perspectives in the study of today’s globalisation processes that needs to be overcome.

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Crime, Risk and Justice: The Politics of Crime Control in Liberal Democracies tells the story of a virtuous tyrant. Market-orientated, neo-liberal, risk society is at once elitist and cooperative, vengeful and rational, democratic and exclusionary. Coming to terms with these contradictions and their relevance for social order is a major theme of this edited collection. Drawing on the work of leading theoretical criminologists from England, Australia and the USA, the book is wide in scope, yet tightly centered around the main themes of crime management and control in contemporary Western societies. Each of the eleven chapters grapple with how the concept of risk affects current issues in social order. The chapters fall in five sections: discourses of liberalism, community initiatives, policing, criminal justice, and the media.

The first chapter by Kevin Stenson introduces the key terms used throughout the collection and contextualizes current crime control practices. Stenson begins by discussing the political salience of crime control and examining how local and global forces have transformed it over the past 50 years. He argues that a neo-liberal political orientation finds the nexus of its agenda in issues of public order. For this reason, crime control is no longer solely in the domain of enforcement agencies but is a dominant issue in the social and political agendas of the western world. Recent trends in public order policy are described not as a retreat from liberal, welfare-state style crime control policies, as critical criminologists commonly portray them, but as a new venture into rough political waters where equality, democracy and due process move with the ebb and flow of the tide. Stenson takes an explicitly political stance in response to these trends and developments. He argues that given the explicitly political nature of order, social scientists need to become more than policy makers, they must be politically engaged in the debate before them.

With this focus in mind, Robert Sullivan uses the second chapter to discuss what he calls “schizophrenic” forms of criminal justice. By this he is referring to John Locke’s dual system of criminal justice; one system for the rich upper classes and another system for the noxious lower classes. Advancing this argument,
Sullivan maintains that this duality is more complex than what Locke (or more contemporary thinkers like E.P. Thompson) originally posited. Further, the so-called “schizophrenia” does not end there. Sullivan marvels at the ability of the state to police the noxious with both inclusionary techniques (like community policing and community justice) and exclusionary techniques (such as racial profiling, aggressive zero tolerance policing and use of the death penalty) all at once. Adding to the confusion of Locke’s original position is the middle-class who increasingly escape the arm of the judicial system and are left to police themselves. Sullivan argues that, ironically, this awkward array of policy does not weaken the state; on the contrary, this precarious balance ensures its hegemony for years to come.

Turning to risk management in the community, in the second section of the book, Todd Clear and Eric Cadora move on to a discussion of corrections. In this chapter their claim is that recent discourses of risk management in penology (like Simon and Feeley’s ‘New Penology’ as described, in D. Nelken (ed.) The Futures of Criminology 1994) overstate the extent to which risk is a novel and pervasive force in correction. Defining risk as the probability that some undesirable event will occur, they claim that the prevention of undesirable events has been foremost throughout penal history. So what is new in penal risk management? Harkening back to Cohen’s vision(s) of social control (1985), they argue penal risk management has recently been broadened (to extend the reach of control) and narrowed (to focus on specific strategies) at the same time. This focus on risk control has resulted in the advancement of strategies that prevent undesirable events. However, this is at the expense of those strategies that seek only to manage or reduce risks that already occur. The irony here is that even risk management policies are subject to risk management. For instance, policy makers tend to prefer treatments that target lower risk populations (which are more likely to succeed regardless of the treatment) than to support a project presenting higher risks (and possibly higher rewards). The next chapter in the section on community risk, by Kevin Stenson and Adam Edwards looks at the political implications of crime control as it is applied in several settings. By examining case studies of risk management in the community they find the often complex and sometimes contradictory goals of crime control produces tension within and between communities, law enforcement agencies and political actors. This tension may result in inconsistent policies on public order from location to location and may compound the amount of disorder in different communities and their ability to deal with it.

The third section, titled “Policing in the risk society” explores the plurality of ideological foundations in recent policing trends. Pat O’Malley, for example, reveals the multi-faceted origins of risk-based policing. He argues that while risk-based approaches to crime control appear to be neo-liberal, they actually incorporate numerous ideas from other perspectives, including those traditionally thought of as adversarial to the neo-liberal school of thought. This makes the current discourse on crime control an interesting hybrid of neo-conservative, welfare state-style socialism, heavily infused with responsibilized individualism. This mix of approaches moves the ideological boundaries of police work
into a new realm, described as “beyond neo-liberalism.” In the following chapter, Eugene McLaughlin and Karim Murji further explore the hybridization mentioned by O’Malley. In particular, they discuss the relationship between new public managerialism (NPM) and neo-liberalism with reference to policing in the United Kingdom. NPM is defined as a set of modernized, accountable, performance driven knowledges and techniques. The authors critique the popular notion that NPM and neo-liberalism are directly linked. Instead they argue that NPM arose independent of neo-liberalism. In fact, NPM materialized when the privatisation of the public sector failed. Accordingly, O’Malley found the results of hybridized knowledge are not unproblematic. For instance, in police work, NPM demands intense scrutiny of the force and threatens constabulary independence; something which may change the objectives and delivery of police work drastically. This detailed yet critical analysis of policing, order maintenance, and NPM makes excellent reading for practitioners, students and theorists alike.

The collection’s next section, on criminal justice, explores both the tyranny and virtue of criminal justice. The chapter by Jonathan Simon juxtaposes the state’s rational and modernized forms of crime control with the state’s recently revitalized penchant for acts of cruelty, including the death penalty, life-time prison sentences and boot camps. In what may be the most vivid and accessible chapter of the book, Simon inverts Jack Katz’s work on offending (see Seductions of Crime 1988) and explores the expressively satisfying aspects of punishment. Simon suggests that cruelty may serve as the basis for a post-modern, hyper-individualistic form of solidarity in which society and its leaders are allied with the victim. Given the elegant discussion of Durkheim and Elias as well as the colorful reference to the MTV show Celebrity Death Match, this chapter would make a great addition to student readings. Barbara Hudson on the other hand takes no part in Simon’s blood lust in the following chapter. Instead she decries the lack of justice in current crime control policies and argues steadfastly for a system that can balance competing rights. Taken together these two chapters imaginatively illustrate the duality of justice in liberal democracies.

The last three chapters of the collection bring the role of the media into the analysis of crime and risk in neo-liberal societies. Given the media’s central role in providing us information on crime (including who does it and how much we should fear it) this is a natural concluding point. The chapter by Reiner, Livingstone and Allen uses longitudinal analysis of the media to convincingly describe a move from “morality tales to calculated risk” in media representations of crime. Richard Sparks presents a more engaged audience in the next chapter. He explores the role of the individual in interpreting and acting on the information provided by the media. In the final chapter, Philip Green convincingly describes how neo-liberal, market forces are driven to create a bland, homogenized cultural product. Returning to the collections’ explicitly political stance, Green compares British and American television. He argues that British TV has been protected from market forces by the paternal public service and hence has been allowed to challenge political and moral canons in its programming. Connecting this chapter to the rest of book, the reader must ask what cost market driven, neo-liberalism
has on crime and justice. If the principles behind Green’s analogy for British and American TV hold for criminal justice policy, we could all be in for some (social) programs of questionable quality.

Surveying this text, it is clear that *Crime, Risk and Justice* provides a comprehensive perspective on issues of governance in liberal democracies. The balanced use of theory and policy makes the collection useful to students and academics interested in criminology and the sociology of crime, as well as policy makers working in criminal justice. By its unfortunate omission of the topic, this collection also paves the way for a more inclusive discussion on crime risk and justice examining these issues in light of current studies on gender, race, class and sexuality. *Crime, Risk and Justice* is a dense and rewarding read. In its attempt to grapple with complexity and contradiction, the book provides a comprehensive picture of the trends facing policies of social control in the risk society.
Book Reviews


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In Rwanda, between March and July of 1994, approximately eight thousand people were slaughtered each day over a stretch of one hundred days. The exact estimates of the number of people killed range between five hundred thousand and one million Tutsi, and between ten and fifty thousand Hutu. Thousands of refugees who witnessed these events and told their stories over those crucial weeks failed to inspire the United States and other powerful national governments to engage in any decent measure of intervention.

Following this criminal denial, when the scale of the killings became evident in published photographs of rivers clogged with brutalized bodies, came the global shock and outrage. Yet for many observers it also served to confirm the worst beliefs about African people as entrenched in continual violence and ethnic or “tribal” conflict. While comparisons with the Holocaust were forthcoming, the popular and intimate nature of this genocide were points of contrast. This was not a genocide that was effected by clinical language and methods, nor by employing systematic tactics of removal and concentration to distance, nor in the dehumanization of its victims. Rather, Rwandan people were killed largely by fellow citizens, often by their neighbors and sometimes their intimates. They were butchered mainly with agricultural tools and by other unspeakable means of torture. While the role of the state elites and their organizational technologies, along with the use of available media, places this genocide firmly in the modern age, it is the horrifying fact of civilian agency that gives the Rwanda “case” its distinctive unconscionability. It is also precisely this aspect, more than any other, which tends to be sidelined by critical observers.

In When Victims Become Killers, Mamdani insists that it is precisely the popular nature of the Rwanda genocide that needs to be confronted. Rather than attributing mass action to generic psychological irrationality or cultural stereotypes, the acute events in this instance must be placed within their regional and historical contexts. While it frequently has been easier to blame amorphous cultural variables (such as a putative Rwandan “tradition” of showing deference to authority) or collective avarice (greed for land in time of scarcity) these do not create an understanding of the specific form or scale of the violence. The
challenge, as Mamdani sees it, is to examine this genocide in terms that make the human tragedy of the genocide apparent, even if the monstrosity is all too visible: “We may agree that genocidal violence cannot be understood as rational: yet, we need to understand it as thinkable” (p. 8), he declares in his introduction.

Such a challenge emerges, at least in part, from the term ‘genocide,’ which in describing a moral totality also obscures social context. Genocide, by its very definition, refers to slaughter within the juridical boundaries of a nation-state. Furthermore, it is considered a perversion of modern warfare precisely because the enemy is annihilated inside rather than across formal, national borders. Finally, genocide refers to acute events that, while located within a brutal and irrevocable chronology (as suggested in the phrase ‘Final Solution’), tend to dehistorize our thinking about it. For Mamdani, understanding the Rwanda genocide as “thinkable” means accounting for regional dynamics and historical realities.

Mamdani begins by theorizing political identity, which he conceptualizes a bit too narrowly as created by the legal infrastructures of state rule. He argues that Hutu and Tutsi are neither primarily cultural nor market-based categories but are rather political realities that are given structural and material consequence within the process of state-formation. Comparing the identities of ‘Hutu’ and ‘Tutsi’ over several centuries of regional rule reveals that colonialism represented a significant shift, giving specific, polarized, and fixed meanings to these categories and dramatizing the consequences for individuals belonging to them. Returning to a classificatory scheme developed in an earlier work (Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), Mamdani crafts a model intended to reveal how modes of colonial rule create distinctive legacies; the form of subaltern identities that are constructed by colonial state-formation specify the dilemmas of post-colonial citizenship. Direct rule is characterized by a state that relates to its colonized subjects through a single body of law and policy while simultaneously excluding and dominating them. The unintended effect of this exclusionary dominating mode is the distribution of privilege resulting in a ‘racial’ distinction between settler and native. Indirect rule, in contrast, places settlers under statutory law and civil society, and incorporates natives under a distinctive principle of political subjugation. This involves the clientship of native rulers and chiefs who, subordinate to the colonial state, rule their subjects through customary laws (codified by the colonial state) and define natives in terms of multiple and discrete ‘ethnicities.’ In this indirect mode of rule, natives are constructed as ‘ethnic’ beings, while non-indigenous subject populations, such as Asians in Uganda, Arabs of Zanzibar, and Coloreds of South Africa, are constructed as ‘races.’

Where they had once been viewed as an indigenous social group, the Tutsi of Rwanda were, under Colonial rule, subjugated as a non-indigenous ‘race’ rather than as an indigenous ‘ethnicity.’ To the minds of their Belgian rulers, the Tutsi were viewed as migrants, herders by trade, whose tall stature and slender European-like facial features identified them as racially distinctive and advanced when compared with the native Hutu. The ‘Hamitic’ hypothesis, a racialized interpretation of biblical tradition, naturalized Tutsi rule over the
farming Hutu and seemed a ready-made tool for indirect rule. As such, the Tutsi occupied an ambiguous relationship to power, defined as a relatively privileged non-native group and yet prevented from enjoying the privilege of the ruling settler population. More critical than the racial discourse was the colonial practice supporting or placing the Tutsis in a managerial capacity as chiefs while subjecting classified Hutu to various required tributes in the form of taxes and hard labor (uburetwa) from which all Tutsi (even poor Tutsis) were exempt.

The privilege this gave to Tutsis was, therefore, tangible, backed by law, and justified through a narrative of race. Hutus had to spend a good portion of their time and energy laboring in payment of tribute. Many actually emigrated to avoid these impossible burdens. Moreover, Hutus, but not Tutsis, were obliged to carry passes. Identity boundaries, once permeable, became entrenched and determinant. Whereas during pre-colonial rule it was possible for a Hutu to become Tutsi, by amassing wealth and winning power, colonial rule fixed identity categories such that upward mobility for Hutu was no longer possible.

Mamdani makes a somewhat awkward leap from this tight theoretical discussion of identity and state-formation to a much looser, quick-flowing account of the revolution of 1959 (the Second Republic) when in Uganda there developed the Rwanda Patriotic Front and from which later emerged the Rwandan civil war in 1990. This account reads a bit more like analytical commentary and frees the book from mapping too tight a logic between rule, identity, and the genocide. As the contingent nature of this history becomes apparent and the circumstances more multi-dimensional, it becomes difficult to understand how the author can support his initial contention that his legal-political model necessarily surpasses the explanatory power of other critical perspectives, particularly what he refers to as left wing economics. Since I found his discussion of the dilemmas of post-colonial citizenship to be extremely valuable, particularly his focus on diasporic and transnational dynamics, it seemed to me to be both unfortunate and unnecessary that he would create such expectations. Mamdani’s determination to continually claim original ground burdened what was, in fact, a rich and complex reading of the various dynamics that created conditions for this genocide. At this level, but on a more mundane one too, the text would certainly have benefited from some additional editing particularly with regard to grammatical errors and excessive repetition. Effusive use of italicized, enumerated points and sub-points should have been limited substantially.

Writing about the Nazi genocide in his book *Understanding the Nazi Genocide: Marxism after Auschwitz* (London: Pluto Press, 1999) Pluto Press: London (with IIRE.) Enzo Traverso points out that “a critical perspective should avoid two opposed, but complementary, traps: on the one hand, an apologetic historicization and, on the other, a summary denunciation pronounced from the pulpit of retrospective ‘wisdom’ as arrogant as it is belated” (pp. 27-28). In focusing on the popular agency of the Rwandan genocide, this may be an especially important and also difficult responsibility. Mamdani’s book sets an important standard in this regard. It is sensitive to just how politicized the writing of this history is going to continue to be, and his concern is neither an inadvertent apology nor
easy explanation. *When Victims Become Killers* does not simply offer a another fresh look at the social problem of civic violence and genocide. Instead it provides a perspective that is grounded in the particulars of the African colonial experience, in a framework that both accounts for differences and enables comparison. What this book effectively demonstrates is that the legacy of colonial rule created dilemmas and, indeed, crises for post-colonial citizenship; crises that many other African states have yet to resolve. Rwanda reveals the worst of what becomes possible when such crises remain unresolved, and when post-colonial rule does not critically examine the categories of power and repression they resisted, overcame, and in some cases reversed or reinvented. Mamdani’s book enables us to consider the lesson of the Rwandan political experience in an implicitly comparative framework.
Book Reviews


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The current and massive influx of ethnic minorities in Europe can no longer be dismissed as a temporary phenomenon. They become people, in Simmel’s famous phrase, who come today and stay tomorrow. The presence of these ethnic minorities in the destination countries has become a *conditio sine qua non* for the economic development of the host society as well as for the transformation of its existing social structure. Their subsequent migration and settlement are affected by various political sources and, in turn, allow them to construct alternative ethnic identities and strategies for political participation. In this way, ethnic minorities can no longer be considered as passive victims of the global capitalist system, but as active socio-political agents within the host country.

Recent sociological debates have questioned the thesis of the globalized and the local diaspora. A devotee of the former, Arjun Appadurai (1996), has argued that nation-states have largely become irrelevant in the age of globalized diaspora. Instead, he posits that the increasing pace of global connections has resulted in ethnicities fragmenting into transnational and deterritorialized communities. By way of contrast, Michal Bodemann (2001) has argued that the primary importance of the nation-state in constructing and maintaining diasporic identities is still important and relevant today. In opposition to Appadurai, Bodemann argues that postmodern discussions tend to disregard the institutional structures at the national level that serve to bind ethnic communities together. Bodemann contends that by ignoring the centrality of the nation-state in favour of support for the thesis concerning the globalized diaspora, we fail to understand the nature and composition of modern ethnic groups.

I begin with the distinctions raised by Appadurai and Bodemann because they have moved this particular debate into new and useful directions, ones which also concern Ayhan Kaya in her new book *Constructing Diasporas*. Moving beyond the Cartesian dualism of national/transnational and global/local, Kaya is instead interested in pointing out a broad range of multiplicities. Kaya perceives that there exist *other* possibilities including the formation of ‘syncretic cultures,’ ‘third spaces,’ and ‘rhizomatic entities.’ His book might best be described is a social anthropological study incorporating these new trends.
Constructing Diasporas is based on Kaya’s doctoral dissertation. In the book, Kaya examines the construction of diasporic cultural identity among Turkish male, working-class, hip-hop youth residing in Kreuzberg, Berlin. The Turkish hip-hop youth, as he illustrates in the book, are composed of a ‘counter culture’ group consisting of young males who, for the most part, resist mainstream society.

His qualitative research involves a participant observation of two youth centers in Berlin as well as in-depth interviews with various Berlin-Turkish hip-hop and rap youth. Two well-known youth centers in Kreuzberg provide places to meet as well as leisure facilities for young Berlin-Turks. It was in these youth centers that Kaya had the opportunity to discover the inner world of his participants. Thus, throughout the book, he provides fascinating insights about their tacit knowledge, beliefs, and preferences, as well as their distinctive language. From this Kaya concludes that the diasporic identity, in dialogue with German society, reveals itself in hip-hop and rap music, graffiti, dance, and a hybrid language, all of which bring about a critical, and sometimes resistant attitude, toward the host society. Furthermore, the inevitable construction of diasporic cultural identity determines, to a large degree, Berlin-Turkish hip-hop youth culture.

The hip-hop youth of “Little Istanbul” has created what Kaya calls ‘a diasporic space’ which constitutes a social and cultural bond with their homeland while simultaneously importing a strong sense of “Turkishness” to Kreuzberg. The diasporic space is not only important for providing a bridge between the diaspora and their homeland, but also for creating an ‘imagined sense of belonging’ for the diasporic subject.

In Kaya’s account, Kreuzberg is the address of the physical diasporic space where Turkish youth feel safe and secure. It provides a fortress for the Turkish youth against racist exclusion and discriminatory elements. The security gained by maintaining this diasporic space in Kreuzberg also provides a sense of belonging to the Turkish youth.

Kaya argues that this diasporic space and cultural identity is constructed through globalization. With regard to globalization, the diasporic cultural identity consists of two major processes. First, the growth of modern communications and transportation has facilitated transnational connections resulting in the distance between homeland and diaspora becoming shorter. Second, concomitant with globalization, both the diasporic Turkish minority and German society in general began a process of integration. According to Kaya, the major reason for this integration continues to be the oppressive force of the nation-state. These two factors are regarded as the main sources of construction of a global cultural stream, in this case the hip-hop culture of Berlin-Turkish youth.

In dealing with social exclusion and discrimination in Germany, Kaya suggests that Berlin-Turkish hip-hop youth have developed a ‘politics of diaspora.’ Reacting against German society, these young people create symbolic boundaries to protect themselves from discrimination and thus, in the process, mark their difference from mainstream German society. This is certainly something shared by almost all minority groups in the diaspora. The unusual characteristics, however, for the Berlin-Turkish youth, lies in the means they use to assert their
distinctiveness. In this case, diasporic networks and global means of transportation and communication have led to the emergence of more *avant-garde* cultural forms.

The diasporic identity of the Turkish hip-hop youth is based on both particularist and universalist assumptions. The former is comprised of attachment to homeland, religion, and ethnic background, all of which provide a real sense of belonging. The latter is formed by global hip-hop culture, including rap, graffiti, breakdance and ‘cool style.’ By being a part of global hip-hop culture, Turkish young people in Berlin transcend the boundaries of the discriminatory and oppressive nation-state, and embrace a more transnational culture.

Between the webs of global and local formations, the migrant youth can be said to be situated in a ‘third culture,’ or ‘third space,’ best represented by the continual process of change and transformation. In contrast to former theories of binary oppositions, ‘third culture’ describes the unique formation of diasporic cultural identity in Berlin. Aziza-A, a German-Turkish hip-hop singer in Berlin, states that she and others like her occupy a “third chair” (p. 202). Her formulation indicates that the man purpose for these young people is to defend a space of their own which separates, removes, or offers them protection from the realms of parental and legal authority, as well as from racial and ethnic discrimination. In this way, voluntary youth centers represent a local reaction against global forces of social exclusion of minorities.

To Kaya’s credit, *Constructing Diasporas* provides an important source for understanding the diasporic cultural identity of Turkish youth in Berlin. By moving between ‘syncretic culture’ and ‘cultural bricolage,’ Kaya introduces the production of culture by individuals. He is critical of previous studies portraying these youth as ‘in-between’ two cultures or in an ‘identity crisis.’ Instead, Kaya emphasizes that their individuality forms a kind of boundary; based not in Turkey or Germany, but on an international culture unique to their new home.

However, Kaya fails to give proper attention to the relationship between the youth and the broader German-Turkish society. All the reader gets are references to the relationships between the existing youth centers. Without this information we do not get a clear picture of the interwoven relations within the context of the host community and the broader social structure. A further study on the existing social relations is necessary toward understanding the place of the youth centers in their broader social setting.

Another shortcoming of the book is the overwhelming use of theoretical terms, such as ‘third culture,’ ‘rhizome,’ ‘cultural bricolage,’ and the like. On the one hand, following the theoretical odyssey of the author may be exciting for the reader. On the other hand, however, the proliferation of concepts turns the theoretical framework into a labyrinth. A useful approach might be to map out the relations between the theoretical approaches and concepts throughout the book in terms of their utility in supporting the empirical data. The largely undeveloped relationship between the empirical data and his theoretical framework is especially revealed in the concept of ‘diaspora.’ This difficulty is not just unique to Kaya’s approach but most other studies on diasporic communities as well. The main problem with such approaches is the absence of juxtaposition between the
theoretical concept of ‘diaspora’ and its empirical indicators. That is, the author in this case provides us with little, if any, empirical evidence concerning the ‘diaspora.’ In the end, the reader is left with a theoretical assumption unsupported by empirical data.

Nevertheless, *Constructing Diasporas* is an important study for those interested in youth culture, ethnic relations, migration, and disasporic identity formation. Kaya’s distinctive approach in providing a rich narrative, along with his historical and structural framework, makes this book a valuable addition to the existing literature. The scarcity of social anthropological studies that deal with second and third generation German-Turkish youth, makes this book a unique contribution to our knowledge in the area. This book will certainly stimulate debate, raise questions, and increase awareness.

**References**

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