

Reed-Danahay discusses methodological issues and Bourdieu's career in the French academic world, this dimension surfaces. As the author competently demonstrates, social space necessarily took a different meaning in works in Algeria in the 1950s and in studies on French politics in the 1980s.

A limitation emerges from Reed-Danahay's analysis of Bourdieu's concept of habitus, and its relationship with social space. Habitus often easily substitutes in analysis for the agent or actor as a social being. As Reed-Danahay writes, a 'person's movement across time and space ... is a product of habitus' (p. 23). Here it is habitus, not the individual social being through the force of her habitus, that engages in social practices (p. 22). Assigning agency to a habitus inhibits analysis of the dynamic complexity of social action, of intentionality and moral responsibility. For this reason, the divided, plural, and contradictory character of the relationship between habitus and social space remains somewhat undeveloped.

Reed-Danahay also clearly shows some of the biases in Bourdieu's approach, such as the focus on male subjects, an overemphasis on state power (which from a French perspective might merely illustrate political realism), and his tendency to analyse social space as 'enclosed' (p. 136). These are all valid points. Analysing border and boundary crossing using the metaphor of a social selector switch could provide a further avenue for developing a Bourdieusian approach to mobility. As numerous studies have shown, transnational migration often signifies capital loss when, for instance, national educational achievements are not portable to another country, or, on the contrary, when an internationally valued diploma enables transnational educational capital accumulation.

In this fine book, Reed-Danahay provides a sensitive and sophisticated analysis of the transformations of the meaning of social space in Bourdieu's numerous studies. It is recommended reading for all those interested in his work.

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ZUMWALT, ROSEMARY LÉVY. *Franz Boas: the emergence of the anthropologist*. 448 pp., illus., bibliogr. Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2019. £28.99 (cloth)

There are several biographies of Franz Boas. However, many attempts to narrate and analyse his six decades of prodigious scholarship, his role in developing and leading professional institutions, his mentorship and placement of a

generation of anthropologists, and his pugnacious toppling of ideas of racial superiority and inferiority while describing the relativity of cultures have fallen short.

Zumwalt is on her way to tackle this herculean set of goals in two volumes. This first volume details Boas's childhood in Germany, college and graduate education, initial research on Baffin and Vancouver Island, and peripatetic and precarious employment. It ends in 1906 when, at 48, Boas secures his first stable position at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

The historical record Zumwalt investigates is his professional and personal correspondence. She twines the professional letters with personal notes between his parents and wife, Marie. Zumwalt translated many of the family letters herself. Her careful analysis of this vast cache of epistolary missives enables her to develop gripping prose that captures Boas's emotions and ambitions, his anxieties and indignations. Zumwalt paints a poignant picture of an emerging anthropologist who was a gamey mix of hubris and insecurity.

We also learn that Boas was a lover and a fighter in equal measure. In the first half of the twentieth century, he would quickly become the confident and imperious 'father' of American anthropology. However, in the last decade of the nineteenth, Zumwalt describes a young father and budding anthropologist mired in a myriad of setbacks, personal tragedies, professional missteps, and just bad luck. Boas's future was anything but preordained.

Zumwalt organizes each of the eleven chapters around a significant milestone in Boas's early career, which begins with his upbringing in Minden, Germany, in the 1860s. He was plagued by brutal headaches that forced him to take respite in the countryside, where he learned to love natural history. Zumwalt describes Boas's college years in delightful detail. He took chemistry with Robert Wilhelm Bunsen (famous for his patented burner) while immersed in his other studies, especially mathematics. Boas also rented a piano for his small flat, and his incessant practising led to the first of many sabre duels. At 19, he was desperate to make friends but was 'repulsed' by the noisy, loud-mouthed, and 'very unbearable Jewish society' (p. 34). He was from a 'refined, acculturated, and intellectual family', and he was shocked by those who embraced and revelled in their Yiddishkeit (p. 35). He completed his studies in the northern seaport of Kiel, where he continued to engage in sabre duels, but this time against those who viewed him 'simply and stereotypically as a Jew' (p. 58).

After Boas completed his doctorate and took a well-earned vacation with family and friends in the Harz mountains, he met Marie Krackowizer, the daughter of his parents' friends. They quickly fell for each other, forming a life-long relationship, and he remarked that 'I am in heaven since I know that you love me' (p. 86). Although desperately longing to be with his beloved, his passion for science separated them for over a year as he conducted his first scientific expedition among people whom he referred to as the 'Eskimos' of Baffin Island (p. 67). It was both arduous and dangerous, but he was sustained by writing love letters to Marie in a letter diary to be read on his return. Financially, his expedition was supported in part by his influential Uncle Abraham Jacobi, who would continue to provide funding for him to pursue his science, including donating to Columbia University to fund his first year as a lecturer there.

The narrative thread Zumwalt produces is driven by letters that chronicled the joys and sorrows, pain and exuberance that Boas and his family members felt when he worked tirelessly at the World's Columbian Exposition, when their daughter died, when he published his first monograph, when he was away so long conducting research in the Pacific Northwest, when he got caught up in a scandal when measuring schoolchildren while a docent at Clark University, or when he was appointed the Director of the massive Jesup North Pacific Expedition. This book is an intimate and extensive epistolary biography that does not interpret, judge, or make a political point, which of course many biographical works on Boas do.

Boas had two loves in his life, Marie and science. In the beginning, both appeared to be star-crossed, but Zumwalt demonstrates how, through his sheer will and determination, and a little help from Uncle Jacobi, he was able to flourish loving them both.

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Writing others

HEMER, OSCAR. *Contaminations and ethnographic fictions: southern crossings*. xv, 220 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. £54.99 (cloth)

This book consists of seven chapters, including an introduction and several short stories that are separate but intertextually linked and based mostly on the author's travels in South Africa but also South Asia. The overarching theme presented

in the introduction is transgression – of the purity/impurity divide (following Mary Douglas) and of various types of borders, including racial borders and borders related to genre. Oscar Hemer states that the intention of the book is 'to explore the possible merging of academic and literary practices' and continues: 'The aim is not experimentation for its own sake, but the search for a form – forms – that is/are congenial with the subject of interrogation: the world in transition, with South Africa as the main focal point' (p. 2, original emphasis).

The texts are written in the third person and take the form of a stream of consciousness from the perspective of a 'ze'. As readers, we get to observe places such as Stellenbosch, Johannesburg, and Bangalore through this perspective. The gender-neutral pronoun 'ze' is used throughout the text, perhaps with the intention of blurring categories through the very form of the narrative. Hemer writes: 'As a woman (hermaphrodite), ze is being seen with other eyes, but ze is also seeing other things than last time, because ze is looking for other things' (p. 18). This is confusing and leaves the reader with many questions – particularly regarding what this change of pronoun adds to the story or to the knowledge produced. The reader is not actually presented with the meaning of the difference between the perspective and experience of 'ze' compared to 'he'. The change of pronoun remains a rather awkward and mainly textual construct. Ethnography builds knowledge from being a part of the context studied, which means that knowledge is produced from somewhere and by someone. The situation of knowledge therefore includes situating oneself as researcher, and this is something that Hemer avoids by inhabiting a position that remains unspecified as if it presented a view from nowhere and everywhere at the same time.

Hemer returns repeatedly to criticism of identity politics. However, the book is clearly about identity, and more specifically about the identity of the author. He writes about not being accepted (either as a novelist or an academic). In a somewhat disturbing passage, he writes about consuming call girls and masseuses and frames this passage as him writing about the 'icky stuff' in order to not come off as 'too prudish' (p. 145). Why this is important to the author and why his insecurities and other emotions are included is never addressed. Instead, the objectification of these women is enhanced by the author's unwillingness to be a subject in the text. A more self-reflexive analysis would have engaged in more critical scrutiny of a privileged perspective.