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[August 2020](#)

*We Review the  
Best of the Latest  
Books*

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Art / History / Cartography

**[Mapping Indigenous Land: Native Land Grants in Colonial New Spain](#)** by Ana Pulido Rull (University of Oklahoma Press)

Between 1536 and 1601, at the request of the colonial administration of New Spain, indigenous artists crafted more than two hundred maps to be used as evidence in litigation over the allocation of land. These land grant maps, or *mapas de mercedes de*

*tierras*, recorded the boundaries of cities, provinces, towns, and places; they made note of markers and ownership, and, at times, the extent and measurement of each field in a territory, along with the names of those who worked it. With their corresponding case files, these maps tell the stories of hundreds of natives and Spaniards who engaged in legal proceedings either to request land, to oppose a petition, or to negotiate its terms. [Mapping Indigenous Land](#) explores how, as persuasive and rhetorical images, these maps did more than simply record the disputed territories for lawsuits. They also enabled indigenous communities – and sometimes Spanish petitioners – to translate their ideas about contested spaces into visual form; offered arguments for the defense of these spaces; and in some cases even helped protect indigenous land against harmful requests.

Drawing on her own paleography and transcription of case files, author Ana Pulido Rull shows how much these maps can tell researchers about the artists who participated in the lawsuits and about indigenous views of the contested lands. Considering the *mapas de mercedes de tierras* as sites of crosscultural communication between natives and Spaniards, Rull also offers an analysis of medieval and modern Castilian law, its application in colonial New Spain, and the possibilities for empowerment it opened for the native population.

Ana Pulido Rull is Associate Professor of Latin American Art History at the University of Arkansas.

As told in [Mapping Indigenous Land](#), the indigenous tradition of using painted maps and manuscripts for litigation was a practical means for validating rightful ownership and resolving disputes over land, so it also became an integral element of colonial life, especially after the establishment of the Second Audiencia (1531-35). The first viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza (r. 1535-50), validated this practice for litigation in colonial courts after personally supervising numerous cases in his biweekly meetings with Natives, who always brought with them their maps and codices to 'support their arguments as they had done in pre-Columbian times. As a result of these new laws, and driven by their own will to obtain a more favorable situation for indigenous people, the *tlacuiloque* continued painting maps to use as evidence in sixteenth-century proceedings. They also worked for Spanish patrons and created maps for them to use in lawsuits, resulting in the production of hundreds of new documents.

[Mapping Indigenous Land](#) examines in detail the *mapas de mercedes de tierras*, kept today in the map gallery (Mapoteca) of the Mexican National Archives (Archivo General de la Nacion, Mexico City). Between 1536 and 1660, Native artists crafted over two hundred maps as part of the evidence requested by the viceroy to prove the truth of claims in legal proceedings. The production and use of these maps allow researchers to examine critical historical and art historical issues such as the adaptation by Native painters to new forms and conventions and the process by which their images could be submitted and accepted within a new context: a court of Spanish law. The creation of such a vast array of maps by Native artists for legal cases is unique to New Spain, thus one major issue Rull examines in [Mapping Indigenous Land](#) is what the historical conditions were that allowed painted maps and manuscripts to play a major part in these lawsuits.

In the case studies presented in [Mapping Indigenous Land](#), Rull considers how the request for a map exemplifies the Spanish administration's use of painted testimonies in the Viceroyalty of New Spain and examine images as sites for cross-cultural communication between Natives and Spaniards. She argues that these painted

documents constituted a negotiated forum accepted by all parties to communicate their ideas and that the production of maps was predicated on the agreement that Native pictorials had a truth value for all participants. The role of the painting is not mentioned in any of the *cedularios* (compilation of official royal documents) that compile the laws of the land grant process; rather, it is something that can be traced back to numerous examples in court records, as Rull illustrates in [Mapping Indigenous Land](#).

Rull argues that the maps painted for these lawsuits constituted a spatial practice that enabled Native painters or the parties they represented – whether indigenous or Spanish – to participate in discussions regarding land distribution in their towns. The records suggest that in some cases the maps could be as critical to establishing the viability of a grant as the oral statements of the witnesses, official documents related to the case (such as signed land deeds), personal testimonies, and other pieces of evidence supplied to the judges. Each of the cases provides scant but significant information on this matter.

In [Mapping Indigenous Land](#) Rull also examines how land grant maps presented indigenous views and understandings of the contested land to the viceroy and other Spanish magistrates. As persuasive and rhetorical images, these maps did more than record the disputed territories for lawsuits; they also enabled indigenous communities to translate their ideas about contested spaces into visual form, offered arguments for the defense of these spaces, and, in some cases, even protected land against harmful requests. The maps relay ideas that the artists wanted to show about a particular place to those who might have a say in the proceedings' outcome – the *alcalde mayor*, the *corregidor*, and the *Audiencia* – as such, they provide a subjective interpretation of the space in question. Since they were painted for the proceedings, they were also implicated in them, and for this reason they do not offer an impartial rendering of a particular place.

When examined collectively, the cases contribute to our understanding of the everyday lives of Natives and Spaniards as they fought over land distribution during the colonial period. The stories in the files also show how complex the social fabric of New Spain was and the various relationships formed between its different elements. The disputes were not limited to the conflicting interests of Spanish petitioners and Natives from the community where they requested land; there are stories about Spaniards of different ranks fighting against each other over boundaries and grants, mayors who favored one Spaniard over another regardless of the evidence presented by both parties, land usurpation, secret negotiations, the role of the mendicant orders, and the importance of the alliances between Natives and Spaniards in the resolution of these conflicts.

The viceroy sent an instruction known as an *Acordado* to the local authorities of the town asking them to initiate the proceedings. In this document he gave guidelines regarding the elements the map should include: where the town was located; how many ranches had been set up in the area; what the distance between them was; and how much space was still 'vacant' for new grants. Rull argues that painting the maps for these legal proceedings provided Native artists with an opportunity to negotiate claims, offer arguments for or against a grant, and communicate ideas about these spaces to their viewers. Therefore, in [Mapping Indigenous Land](#), Rull pays close attention to the various ways in which the painted maps differ from the *Acordado*'s

guidelines. The book presents a sustained examination of various ways in which Native-made maps substantiated claims in colonial legal proceedings.

[Mapping Indigenous Land](#) makes an essential contribution to Mesoamerican ethnohistory, art history, and colonial Latin American history. The book's readability, interdisciplinary focus, and use of innovative technologies of map analysis mean that specialists and students alike will find its discussion compelling. – Susan Kellogg, author of *Law and the Transformation of Aztec Culture, 1500-1700*

An important contribution to the literature on Mexico's indigenous cartography and colonial art, Rull's [Mapping Indigenous Land](#) suggests new ways of understanding how colonial space itself was contested, negotiated, and defined. <>

Audio / Essays / Philosophy / Politics

## [Of Color](#): Essays by Jaswinder Bolina, MP3CDs, running time: 2.5 hours (Tantor Media)

In his debut essay collection, [Of Color](#), award-winning poet Jaswinder Bolina meditates on 'how race,' as he puts it, 'becomes metaphysical': the cumulative toll of the micro-aggressions and macro-pressures lurking in the academic market, on the literary circuit, in the dating pool, and on the sidewalks of any given U.S. city. [Of Color](#) trains a keenly thoughtful lens on questions that are never fully abstract – about immigration and assimilation and class, about the political utility of art, about what it means to belong to a language and a nation that brand one as *other*.

Bolina is an American poet and essayist. His new book of poems is *The 44th of July*. His previous collections include *Phantom Camera* (winner of the 2012 Green Rose Prize in Poetry from New Issues Press), *Carrier Wave* (winner of the 2006 Colorado Prize for Poetry from the Center for Literary Publishing at Colorado State University), and the digital chapbook *The Tallest Building in America*. His poems have appeared in numerous literary journals and been included in The Best American Poetry series. He teaches on the faculty of the M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing at the University of Miami. The audio version of [Of Color](#) is read by the author.

*Eminently readable... entrusts us with an honest conversation that we all should be having with each other.* – Ploughshares

*Jaswinder Bolina's insightful, raw and honest collection of brilliant essays illuminate the joys and pains of being a specific person [Of Color](#) and through his unique lens we also come to understand the universal ongoing story of America.* – Wajahat Ali, author of *The Domestic Crusaders* and contributor to CNN and the New York Times

*Lyrical intelligent, exceptionally alert. A crucial addition to the growing canon of works about race in contemporary America.* – Sarah Manguso, author of *Ongoingness* and *300 Arguments*

*(M)oves from the polemic to the personal with the candidness and flair of a rollicking dinner conversation.* – Aisha Sabatini Sloan, author of *Dreaming of Ramadi in Detroit*

*(A) powerful and wise collection of essays, one that will make reverberations into how we look at this country in the future.* – Cathy Park Hong, author of *Engine Empire* and *Minor Feelings*

[Of Color](#) is a bold, expansive, and finally optimistic diagnosis of present-day America.

<>

**Truth and Honor: The President Ford Story** by Lindsey

McDivitt, illustrated by Matt Faulkner (Sleeping Bear Press)

*I believe that truth is the glue that holds government together, not only our Government, but civilization itself.* – Gerald R. Ford, Jr.

On August 9, 1974 Gerald R. Ford, Jr. was sworn into office as the 38<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. Elected president after the turmoil of the early 1970s, Americans were ready for an honest, hardworking politician in the oval office. And that is just what they got with President Ford.

As told in [Truth and Honor](#), Ford was a man of integrity and honesty, who cared deeply about all Americans, not just the ones of his own party. His life, tougher than some and filled with character-building lessons, had prepared him for the job – from his childhood in Grand Rapids, Michigan to his days on the University of Michigan football team and in the Navy, to his years representing the Great Lakes State in Congress.

Ford represented Michigan in Congress for nearly a quarter of a century before he became the 38<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. In [Truth and Honor](#), young readers learn what made Gerald Ford the calm and stabilizing leader in whom the American people could put their faith and trust.

The author of [Truth and Honor](#), Lindsey McDivitt, is the author of *Nature's Friend: The Gwen Frostic Story*. Illustrator Matt Faulkner is an award-winning children's book author and artist who has illustrated over 40 books. His titles include *The Night Henry Ford Met Santa*.

*... our dad faced many personal and professional challenges and disappointments from his early years all the way through his later life as president. Those hardships taught our dad the lessons that made him the man he became and prepared him for the roles he would play for our family and the nation. Through these setbacks, our dad learned the value of hard work, how to persevere in the face of adversity, the importance of telling the truth, and how to care for and lead those also facing struggles.* – Mike, Jack, Steve, and Susan Ford, from the book

[Truth and Honor](#) tells the true and compelling story of Ford's life and legacy. Back-matter includes a letter from the Ford family and a historical timeline. <>

Economics / Environment / Climate Change / Handbook

**Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change** edited by

Graciela Chichilnisky & Armon Rezai (Edward Elgar

Publishing)

A timely handbook, [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) recognizes the emergence of climate change as the defining topic of our time. With public climate discourse growing more urgent every year, this Handbook brings together international experts from different economic disciplines to answer critical climate policy questions.

Chapters present key ideas and policies to support and accelerate advances in three key areas: the political economy of climate change and climate policy, integrated assessment modeling, and economic and resource sustainability. Contributors discuss the distributional implications of climate change and how policymakers may respond in order to contribute to economic transformation in the midst of a global crisis.

[Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) is edited by Graciela Chichilnisky and Armon Rezai. Chichilnisky is Professor of Mathematics and Economics, Columbia University and CEO and Co-Founder of Global Thermostat in New York. Rezai is Professor at WU Vienna University of Economics and Business and Senior Guest Research Scholar at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria. The book has 34 contributors.

[Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) comes to light at a time when economic sciences start to recognize the inevitable emergence of climate change as the defining topic of our time. The chapters contain ideas and policies to support and accelerate the change. Scientists now know that climate change embodies and forecasts the future of human civilization and therefore its economic organization. The importance of climate change in economics is no surprise. It is to be expected because, as the traditional definition goes, economics is about the production, use, and distribution of resources. Resources are at the core of economics, this much is clear. What is perhaps less clear is the transformation that has occurred in our perception of resources. Only now that humans dominate the geology of the planet have we come to recognize that the most important resources for human societies are the atmosphere of the planet, its bodies of waters and its biodiversity, namely the global environment. The definition of economics has not changed: it is our understanding of resources that has fundamentally changed.

[Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) is divided into three sections that cover critical new areas and ideas about economics and climate change: The political economy of climate change and climate policy, integrated assessment modeling, and climate change and sustainability.

Part I examines issues of "The Political Economy of Climate Change and Climate Policy" and expands the conventional economic answer to climate change: 'Make polluters pay.' The externality associated with emitting harmful greenhouse gases needs to be internalized so that those reaping the benefits of emitting also bear its costs.

Increasingly, researchers and politicians realize that problems of political economy and distribution, of both carbon underground and in the atmosphere, are at the heart of the impediments to climate policy and their solutions are tantamount to successful climate policy. They are explored in the first section .

In Chapter 1, entitled "Distributional issues in climate policy: air quality co-benefits and 'carbon rent', James K. Boyce tackles the implementation of a carbon tax that brings benefit to the current population through better air quality and recycled tax revenue. This chapter considers two ways that climate policy can bring substantial benefits to the present generation: (1) air quality improvements from reduced burning of fossil fuels; and (2) recycling of the rent created by carbon pricing.

In Chapter 2, entitled "Evaluating policies to implement the Paris Agreement: a toolkit with application to China", Ian Parry, Baoping Shang, Nate Vernon, Philippe Wingender, and Tarun Narasimhan discuss the recent policy developments and future policy options in China which, with its 1.3 billion human population, has become the world's largest annual emitter of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). They propose a spreadsheet model for

evaluating alternative fiscal and regulatory instruments that policy makers may consider for implementing the UN 2015 Paris Agreement's mitigation pledges, or national implementation targets. Various policies are evaluated against alternative metrics, including impacts on (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, revenue, deaths from local air pollution, economic welfare, and economic incidence across households and industries.

Chapter 3 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), entitled "Bargaining to lose: a permeability approach to post-transition resource extraction", is authored by Natasha Chichilnisky-Heal who turns to the source of emissions, discussing resource extraction in resource-based developing economies and the rich political economy that comes with the multinational extraction industry. Her new theory is illustrated with unique hands-on experience in the case of copper and gold mines in post-communist Mongolia and in post-socialist Zambia, the largest in the world, and focuses on a bargaining game between the state and key financial organizations: the Bretton Woods Institutions (IMF, World Bank) and multinational corporations (MNCs) such as the resources conglomerate Rio Tinto.

Chapter 4, entitled "Host-MNC relations in resource-rich countries", Natasha Chichilnisky-Heal and Geoffrey M. Heal develop further the analysis of Chapter 3 within a theoretical context and from the perspective of the global commons and an individual firm's investment decision. The chapter discusses the relationship between a resource-rich developing country and a multinational corporation (MNC) that is developing the nations' resources for the international market. The authors model the connections between transparency, permeability and economic development, considering the polar cases of democracy and autocracy. This chapter's analysis provides a micro foundation for the 'obsolescing bargain model' of host-MNC relations.

In Chapter 5 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), entitled "Bargaining to lose the global commons", Natasha Chichilnisky-Heal and Graciela Chichilnisky apply the analysis of Chichilnisky-Heal in Chapter 3 to the global commons. Natasha Chichilnisky-Heal's 'permeability' approach questions the treatment of the state as a decision maker having the public good as an objective and replaces it by the results of a bargaining game between the state and the International Organizations (IMF, World Bank). Her new theory is illustrated by her unique hands-on experience for the cases of copper and gold mines in Mongolia and in Zambia. Chapter 5 generalizes Chichilnisky-Heal's 'bargaining to lose' approach to the resource curse providing economic models that validate the original conclusions and exploring its implications for the global commons: the atmosphere, the oceans and biodiversity.

Part II of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) covers "Integrated Assessment Modelling". To understand the connections between individual elements of the climate and the economy, climate scientists and economists have developed models for the integrated assessment of both. The chapters of this section introduce the most prominent models used in climate policy and show how they can be improved to include important complex geophysical phenomena, distributional aspects, and sectoral, institutional, and behavioral details or to provide simple policy rules for politicians.

In Chapter 6, entitled "Integrated Assessment Models of Climate Change", Chris Hope presents an overview of the development of the economic modeling of climate change by integrating impacts of climate on the economy and of the economy on the climate. The use of the models in policy-making has been rapid and influential, and the development and use of the models under the scrutiny of critics is strong and ongoing.

In Chapter 7 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), William Brock and Anastasios Xepapadeas introduce a spatial dimension to a standard model of integrated economic assessment by explicitly tracing the movement of heat and considering polar amplification. This chapter, entitled "Climate change policy under spatial heat transport and polar amplification", is the first instance in climate economics that considers a combination of spatial heat transport and polar amplification. The results suggest that it is possible to build climate economic models that include the very real climatic phenomena of heat transport and polar amplification, and still maintain analytical tractability and show that the effect of heat transfer and polar amplification on climate policy depends upon the interaction of climate component dynamics with the distribution of welfare weights, population, and productive capacities across latitudes.

In Chapter 8, the focus is shifted from global to regional modeling. Authors Luis M. Abadie, Elisa Sainz de Murieta, Ibon Galarraga and Anil Markandya discuss in "Progressive adaptation strategies in European coastal cities: a response to flood-risk under uncertainty" strategies for European coastal cities of adaptation to climate change. The authors describe a novel stochastic model of sea-level rise and show how risk measures can be applied to such rising sea levels and the way in which sea-level rise and socio-economic development has been integrated.

In Chapter 9, Armon Rezai and his co-authors Frederick van der Ploeg and Cees Withagen contribute in "Economic growth and the social cost of carbon: additive versus multiplicative damages" to recent debates on how fossil fuel emissions should be priced and whether there are simple rules which policy makers can follow. They therefore discuss optimal carbon pricing and derive simple policy rules for the cases of additive and multiplicative damage. They investigate the differential impact of additive and multiplicative global warming damages for both a socially optimal and business-as-usual scenario.

In Chapter 10 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), Mark Budolfson and Francis Dennig study how income inequalities across and within countries affect the optimal response to climate change. In "Optimal global climate policy and regional carbon prices" they find that, rather than impose one global price, heterogeneous prices are warranted with potentially large disparities if society's aversion to inequality is considerable. Budolfson and Dennig show that the welfare gain from optimal differential prices is always positive for all their simulations and provides theoretical insights on monetary transfer necessary in concrete climate negotiations.

In Chapter 11, Alessandro Tavoni and Doruk Iris in "Tipping and reference points in climate change games" take a closer look at the dynamics of energy transition that carbon pricing can help usher. Once a tipping point for investment in low carbon technologies has been reached, and constituencies with stakes in the nascent markets have been formed, standard economic forces could sustain the transition to a carbon-neutral economy. Key insights emerging from the literature are that strong leadership in mitigation efforts induces cooperation by others; the reasons for why countries' high expectations about others' abatement efforts could have detrimental effects; and the reasons why developing countries have been relatively reluctant to exert even limited abatement efforts.

The last part of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) combines "Climate Change and Sustainability" by embedding the climate crisis in the broader study of sustainability and contextualizing it either historically and in previous environmental

disasters or within broader equity considerations, be they intertemporal across generations or using developmental approaches across regions.

In Chapter 12, entitled "Climate change, Malthus and collapse", Norman Schofield examines the impending deleterious and catastrophic effects of climate change in the context of sustainability and previous environmental disasters and presents a way forward by drawing on the logic of the Condorcet Jury Theorem. This chapter points out that the author draws a parallel between Rome and our global economy to suggest that climate change could induce a Malthusian trap for us unless we pay heed to Pope Francis's call for us to "Care for Our Common Home". Since this presents us with a common goal, it is possible that the logic of the Condorcet Jury Theorem may give us hope of wiser choices over our future.

In Chapter 13, Lance Taylor and Duncan Foley also frame climate change in the context of the Malthusian theory. In "Greenhouse gas and cyclical growth", they develop a demand-driven integrated assessment model in which ever-increasing energy demand to power growing labor productivity, is the key to achieving sustained economic growth. To highlight the role of growing energy use in economic development, their growth model incorporates dynamics of capital per capita, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, concentration, and labor and energy productivity.

Chapter 14 in [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) by Robin Hahnel is entitled "Growth and sustainability" and discusses climate change, and more broadly, environmental sustainability in relation to economic production and labor productivity, arguing for a steady state economy and delineating what is necessary for achieving it. Following the earlier contributions, this chapter explains the difference between growth of production of goods and growth of environmental throughput, and it presents a model suitable for rigorously measuring changes in labor productivity and throughput efficiency.

In Chapter 15, Frikk Nesje and Geir B. Asheim discuss whether altruism is necessarily to the benefit of future generations, asking "Intergenerational altruism: a solution to the climate problem?" Intergenerational altruism may induce more economic growth today to provide future generations with the means to weather the deleterious effects of climate change, thereby spurring climate change itself. Only when the climate externality is addressed by pricing carbon effectively, increased intergenerational altruism reduces the threat of climate change.

In Chapter 16 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), John M. Hartwick and Tapan Mitra also consider sustainability in the context of intergenerational justice in their essay "On intertemporal equity and efficiency in a model of global warming". They study equitable paths in a model where irreversible global warming is produced using an exhaustible resource. This path follows an extended version of Hartwick's Rule of investment, and attain the maximum sustainable utility among all equitable paths that have a constant savings rate.

In Chapter 17, Penny Mealy and Cameron Hepburn approach sustainability in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals in "Transformational change: parallels for addressing climate and development goals", and focus on climate change and poverty alleviation. The authors argue that the UN Paris Agreement provides a promising new international platform to progress a unique collective framework for global climate cooperation. Against this encouraging backdrop, Mealy and Hepburn draw attention to the twin climate and development challenges: both require societies to navigate and manage system-wide transformative change. Network analysis

provides a useful framework to investigate relationships across economic sectors and allows scholars and policy makers to better understand technological diffusion and industrial transition possibilities for a socially and environmentally more sustainable future.

In Chapter 18 of [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#), Cameron Hepburn and J. Doyne Farmer in "Less precision, more truth: uncertainty in climate economics and macroprudential policy" draw on the existing knowledge of complex systems, particularly financial systems, to inform our understanding and modeling of climate change and climate policy. Their key findings are: systematic data collection at a variety of scales is fundamental to properly understanding and modeling systemic risk; parameter values and the resulting model outputs need to be treated with great skepticism due to the underlying uncertainty. Since most economic models spring off the same set of narrow assumptions, significant variables, feedbacks, non-linearities, heterogeneity and non-rational behavior can, therefore, be easily overlooked. The authors argue for 'conclusions that are less precise but more truthful' since they place emphasis on resilience as well as efficiency.

*More fruitful interaction between economists and political scientists studying possible policy responses to climate change is long overdue. With this volume of 18 essays, co-editors Chichilnisky and Rezai, along with 32 other distinguished writers, do much to facilitate invaluable progress toward a virtuous circle of mutually reinforcing economic and political analyses.* – Peter J. Hammond, University of Warwick, UK

The Handbook contributes to the transformation of economics in the midst of a momentous evolution in climate policy. With reference to both theoretical and applied economics, [Handbook on the Economics of Climate Change](#) is critical reading for economists working in the field of climate policy and climate change. It will also appeal to a broader group of environmental scientists and scholars. <>

Education & Learning / K-12 / Teaching

**[Deeper Competency-Based Learning: Making Equitable, Student-Centered, Sustainable Shifts](#), 1<sup>st</sup> edition** by Rose Colby, Karin Hess, & Daniel Joseph (Corwin)

Education & Learning / Psychology / Racial Justice

**[White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#) (2018)** by Robin DiAngelo, with a foreword by Michael Eric Dyson (Beacon Press)

*It's focusing on race that divides us.*

*It's racist to generalize about people based on race.*

*How can you say I'm racist? You don't even know me.*

The *New York Times* best-selling [White Fragility](#) (2018) exploring the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and

how these reactions maintain racial inequality.

In [White Fragility](#), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and “allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to ‘bad people’” (Claudia Rankine).

DiAngelo, academic and trainer on issues of racial and social justice for more than twenty years, was formerly a tenured professor of multicultural education at Westfield State University.

According to DiAngelo, referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how white fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what people can do to engage more constructively.

According to Michael Eric Dyson in the foreword to [White Fragility](#), race is a condition. A disease. A card. A plague. Original sin. For much of American history, race has been black culture's issue; racism, a black person's burden. Whiteness, however, has remained constant.

Like the rest of race, whiteness is a fiction, what is termed a 'social construct,' an agreed-upon myth that has empirical grit because of its effect, not its essence. But whiteness goes even one better: it is a category of identity that is most useful when its very existence is denied.

DiAngelo joins the front ranks of white antiracist thinkers with a stirring call to conscience and, most important, consciousness in her white brothers and sisters. White fragility it is a crucial concept that inspires readers to think more deeply about how white folk understand their whiteness and react defensively to being called to account for how that whiteness has gone under the radar of race for far too long.

DiAngelo asks readers of [White Fragility](#) to see that all politics have rested on identities, and that those identities are critical features of wrestling with how people have gone wrong in the effort to set things right – which too often has meant make them white. Dyson says that white fragility is an idea that registers the hurt feelings, shattered egos, fraught spirits, vexed bodies, and taxed emotions of white folk. In truth, their suffering comes from recognizing that they are white, that their whiteness has given them a big leg up in life while crushing others' dreams, and that their whiteness has shielded them from growing up as quickly as they might have done had they not so heavily leaned on it to make it through life.

*The value in [White Fragility](#) lies in its methodical, irrefutable exposure of racism in thought and action, and its call for humility and vigilance. – The New Yorker*  
*[T]houghtful, instructive, and comprehensive... This slim book is impressive in its scope and complexity; DiAngelo provides a powerful lens for examining, and practical tools for grappling with, racism today. – Publishers Weekly, starred review*

*[White Fragility](#) is a book everyone should be exposed to. With any luck, most who are will be inspired to search themselves and interrupt their contributions to racism. – Shelf Awareness, Starred Review*

*A valuable guide... While especially helpful for those new to the critical analysis of whiteness, this work also offers a useful refresher to anyone committed to the ongoing process of self-assessment and anti-oppression work. – Library Journal*

*As a woman of color, I find hope in this book because of its potential to disrupt the patterns and relationships that have emerged out of long-standing colonial principles*

and beliefs. [White Fragility](#) is an essential tool toward authentic dialogue and action. May it be so! – Shakti Butler, president of World Trust and director of *Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*

A rare and incisive examination of the system of white body supremacy that binds us all as Americans.... With authenticity and clarity, she provides the antidote to white fragility and a road map for developing white racial stamina and humility. [White Fragility](#)

loosens the bonds of white supremacy and binds us back together as human beings. – Resmaa Menakem, author of *My Grandmother's Hands* and *Rock the Boat*

As powerful forces of white racism again swell, DiAngelo invites white progressives to have a courageous conversation about their culture of complicity.... [White Fragility](#) provides important antiracist understanding and essential strategies for well-intentioned white people who truly endeavor to be a part of the solution. – Glenn E. Singleton, author of *Courageous Conversations About Race*

Robin DiAngelo demonstrates an all-too-rare ability to enter the racial conversation with complexity, nuance, and deep respect. Her writing establishes her mastery in accessing the imaginal, metaphoric mind where the possibility for transformation resides. With an unwavering conviction that change is possible, her message is clear: the incentive for white engagement in racial justice work is ultimately self-liberation. – Leticia Nieto, coauthor of *Beyond Inclusion, Beyond Empowerment*

White fragility is the secret ingredient that makes racial conversations so difficult and achieving racial equity even harder. But by exposing it and showing us all – including white folks – how it operates and how it hurts us, individually and collectively, Robin DiAngelo has performed an invaluable service. An indispensable volume for understanding one of the most important (and yet rarely appreciated) barriers to achieving racial justice. – Tim Wise, author of *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*

Robin DiAngelo's [White Fragility](#) brings language to the emotional structures that make true discussions about racial attitudes difficult. With clarity and compassion, DiAngelo allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to 'bad people.' In doing so, she moves our national discussions forward with new 'rules of engagement.' This is a necessary book for all people invested in societal change through productive social and intimate relationships. – Claudia Rankine

This editor agrees with Dyson that [White Fragility](#) is a vital, necessary, and beautiful book, a bracing call to white folk everywhere to see their whiteness for what it is and to seize the opportunity to make things better now. DiAngelo kicks all the crutches to the side and demands that white folk finally mature and face the world they've made while seeking to help remake it for those who have neither their privilege nor their protection.

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## Health & Wellness / Self-Care / Religion & Spirituality / Christianity

### [Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition by Peter Walters & John Byl (Human Kinetics, Inc.)

[Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, helps undergraduate students explore key topics that affect their health and well-being and apply what they learn to their daily lives.

This updated text examines wellness from a holistic perspective, delving into how students can thrive in body, mind, and spirit. Students learn how to

- More fully understand God, themselves, and their purpose in life.
- Have strong and healthy relationships with others.
- Develop cardio-respiratory fitness, muscular fitness, flexibility and mobility.
- Have a healthy attitude toward their bodies, eat well, and manage weight properly.
- Understand and apply good sleep hygiene to maximize alertness.
- Adopt emotionally healthy habits and deal with stress in a constructive way.

Authors are Peter Walters and John Byl. Walters is a professor in the department of applied health science at Wheaton College. In 1996 he became director of the wellness program at the university level. Byl is a professor emeritus of physical education at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario. He is currently the Canadian educational consultant for Gopher Sport.

The material in [Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#) is based on current research and is delivered through a faith-based perspective that helps students apply aspects of behavior modification as they learn how to take charge of the health of their bodies, minds, and spirits.

Written by highly respected Christian academics, the text includes chapter objectives, a glossary that defines key terms from each chapter, and easy-to-read charts that highlight specific information. This latest edition also features a new web study guide that makes [Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#) a particularly valuable and unique resource. For each chapter in the text, the web study guide supplies readers with

- An introductory self-assessment activity on the chapter's topic.
- Application and learning activities.
- Self-reflection writing prompts to help students process the chapter's content.
- Suggested websites and readings for further exploration of the topic.
- An interactive key terms quiz.

[Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#) offers instructors free access to online ancillaries, including an instructor guide, a presentation package, and a test package.

"This text," says coauthor Walters, "is a book about accepting our God-given roles and capacities. Then empowered by the Spirit of God, we can make healthy choices regarding our mind, body, and soul. The end result is what ancients called 'the good life,' current academics call 'human flourishing,' and what scriptures call 'shalom'."

"Personal wellness is often achieved through mental and physical discipline," adds coauthor Byl. "However, it is also important to open yourself to the power of God through the Holy Spirit. It is written in Bible that 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control' (Galatians 5:22–23). Ideas related to the fruit of the Spirit have been woven through the text, and a couple of chapters offer brief vignettes on a particular fruit of the Spirit, which demonstrates how the Spirit heals and makes one well."

[Christian Paths to Health and Wellness](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition is a faith-based text that helps students explore and apply key concepts of holistic health and wellness. A new web study guide assists students in retaining and using what they learn. The book equips students with the knowledge and tools they need to adopt healthy lifestyles in all aspects of their lives. <>

## History / American West / Biographies & Memoirs

### [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#): The Old New West: A Personal History by Frank Bergon (The University of Nevada Press)

From critically acclaimed author Frank Bergon comes a new personal narrative about the San Joaquin Valley in California. [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) brings readers back to an Old West at odds with New West realities where rapid change is a common trait and memories are of rural beauty. Despite the physical transformations wrought by technology and modernity in the twenty-first century, elements of an older way of thinking still remain, and Bergon traces its presence using experiences from his own family and friends.

Bergon is a novelist, critic, and essayist. His writing mainly focuses on the history and environment of the American West, including his most recent work *Two-Buck Chuck & The Marlboro Man*.

Communal camaraderie, love of the land and its food, and joy in hard work done well describe Western lives ignored or misrepresented in most histories of California and the West. Yet nostalgia does not drive Bergon's intellectual return to that world. Prevalent was a culture of fighting, ignorance about alcoholic addiction, brutalizing labor, and a feudal mentality that created a pain better lost and bid good riddance.

Through it all, what emerges from the portraits and essays in [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) is a revelation of small-town and ranch life in the rural West. A place where the American way of extirpating the past and violently altering the land is accelerated. For years Bergon says he resisted dredging up early memories of his youth for fear of resurrecting painful experiences or hardening them into false stories. Now that he has written the story of that night in California when the sword was stolen, he realizes he was recounting the story as he had narrated it to his friends in Oakland – with a few added recollections.

In the profiles and essays in [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#), Bergon offers glimpses of a way of life on ranches and small towns of the mid-twentieth century, put into motion and sound through their telling with something of a dream's truth. Bergon's concern is primarily with California's San Joaquin Valley, in the center of the state, where he grew up on his Béarnais American grandfather's Madera County ranch, defined as a Westerner. He moves back in time to write about his own family and boyhood community, people whose stories also include a variety of immigrants and migrants, as well as their offspring, many shaped as he was in small towns and on family ranches. The book isn't an autobiography or a traditional memoir. It's an attempt through

personal essays and profiles of people he has known, including his own family, to help understand how it felt and what it meant to be alive in a particular community at a particular time. He says he soon discovered that he was writing about something else: Western life ignored or misrepresented in most histories of California and the West. In a time calling for an understanding of rural America, what emerges in these stories is a way of life that continues to be dismissed or remain invisible in the larger culture. These are stories of rural and small-town Westerners, who helped shape California, the New West, and America itself, people whose stories point to how those from rural America think and feel today.

The California of his boyhood led the way in making the 'New West' a place of suburban tract ranch homes, shopping centers, supermarkets, drive-in theaters, and trend-setting clothes, including Levi's with copper rivets originally invented for working men by a Latvian Jewish immigrant and a California company a hundred years earlier. "Don't Californicate Our State," other Westerners hollered. But it was useless. California, as the extreme West, showed the way the urban-and-suburban West was going and simply got there first. The Santa Clara Valley, where he went to high school, was a region of flowering fruit trees nicknamed Valley of Heart's Delight before it dissolved into Silicon Valley, where overpriced real estate, computer chips, and start-ups replaced apricots and cherries in the latest rush for gold. The rural San Joaquin Valley remained a place where the lingering Old West intersected with the New West. Now viewed from the twenty-first century, the valley of his boyhood appears in sepia hues as the Old New West.

Other people's voices and memories appear in this portrayal of the West, as noted in the "We" of the book's title. In their stories, both old-timers and newcomers in [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) relate overlapping experiences and shared beliefs. Bergon's immigrant Basque grandmother in Nevada shares something with the migrant Okie he knew as the toughest kid in the valley. Toughness as a primary virtue is what Okie boys and girls understood not simply as physical strength for fighting and work but an ability to endure. His California-born grandfather, who was a tenant farmer in the early twentieth century, could talk with a migrant African American landowner and an immigrant fieldworker fifty years later because they shared a belief in the rewards of perseverance, an allegiance to Western dreams of freedom and opportunity, and an expectation of diversity and porous social-class boundaries, all coexisting with an abiding acceptance of disappointment.

As a descendant of immigrants, Bergon says he is aware of how the valley's diverse population can challenge conventional views of California and the West. The rural values that emerge in [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) sometimes created a shared cultural environment, but a region is composed of both cultural and physical environments that intertwine.

*In elegant prose, Frank Bergon has conjured a complex portrait of the San Joaquin Valley of California during the mid-1950s and beyond, where some ninety distinct ethnic communities lived together for a century, his own valley family being Basque, as were his beloved grandparents in Nevada. [The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) is one of the best literary memoirs written, focusing on the particular while evoking universal human experience. – Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, author of Red Dirt: Growing Up Okie* These essays are masterfully crafted. Frank Bergon has a real strength for giving just the right details for us to get a sense of the people he writes about, with a touch of humor, a touch of sadness. As one who has traveled through the San Joaquin Valley several

times, but has never read a memoir from there, I found the book captivating, deepening my knowledge of the place and its history. – Daryl Farmer, author of *Where We Land: Stories*

[The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) is a magnificent book about the American West and a multigenerational family's ties to its ancestral homeland and to the daunting land of the San Joaquin Valley. Frank Bergon has delivered a literary bounty. I don't think a page went by without an observation, insight, or detail that somehow sparked my imagination or stayed with me long after I'd turned the page. I loved spending time with these remarkable people in this unforgettable place. – Meghan Daum, author of *The Problem with Everything: My Journey Through the New Culture Wars*

[The Toughest Kid We Knew](#) is an exploration of ranch and small-town life in California's San Joaquin Valley. What Bergon has written is a portrayal of a past and people shaping the country he called home. <>

History / Sports / African-American

## **[A Most Beautiful Thing: The True Story of America's First All-Black High School Rowing Team](#) by Arshay Cooper (Flatiron Books)**

*I look around the gym and see students I know from the neighborhood and some I don't. These are the sons of drug addicts, prostitutes, gang members, and drug dealers. The people that we will race are possibly sons of lawyers, doctors, professors, and salesmen. I try to picture us in a boat next to them. I think about what the man told me at the barbershop. Maybe I can succeed like these coaches are telling us. Despite everything, I still believe in seizing the moment and that an opportunity is a gift. My mother taught me that.*

*I lean over and ask, "Where do we sign up?"*

*My mind starts playing tricks on me, saying shit like you're not built for balancing boats, callused hands, open water, and regattas – that I don't belong in this ancient sport so long reserved for schools like Harvard and Yale, Oxford and Cambridge. Places light years away from the West Side of Chicago. – from the book*

[A Most Beautiful Thing](#) is the true story of a group of young men growing up on Chicago's West side who form the first all-black high school rowing team in the nation, and in doing so not only transform a sport, but their lives.

Author Arshay Cooper is a rower, author, motivational speaker, and volunteer for numerous community outreach organizations. He works with nonprofits focusing on opening the boathouse doors to everyone, and he was the recipient of a 2017 US Rowing Golden Oars Award.

Growing up on Chicago's Westside in the 90's, Cooper knows the harder side of life. The street corners are full of gangs, the hallways of his apartment complex are haunted by drug addicts he calls 'zombies' with strung-out arms, clutching at him as he passes by. His mother is a recovering addict, and his three siblings all sleep in a one room apartment, a small infantry against the war zone on the street below.

Cooper in [A Most Beautiful Thing](#) says that he keeps to himself, preferring to write poetry about the girl he has a crush on, and spends his school days in the home-ec kitchen

dreaming of becoming a chef. And then one day as he's walking out of school he notices a boat in the school lunchroom, and a poster that reads "Join the Crew Team". Having no idea what the sport of crew is, Cooper decides to take a chance. This decision to join is one that will forever change his life, and those of his fellow teammates. As Cooper and his teammates begin to come together to learn how to row – many never having been in water before – the sport takes them from the mean streets of Chicago, to the hallowed halls of the Ivy League. But Cooper and his teammates face adversity at every turn, from racism, gang violence, and a sport that has never seen anyone like them before.

*Uplifting and always enlightening.... [A Most Beautiful Thing] is a coming-of-age story told with the benefit of adult insights and mature hindsight.... This book is less about this specific sport than how that sport becomes transformative, empowering some kids, giving others a direction. – Chicago Tribune*

*Cooper details how he and his teammates experienced racism and discrimination in the community around the boathouses the team traveled to and how they took a risk in trying a mostly all-white sport that had never seen anyone like them before – and how it ultimately transformed his life. – Sports Illustrated*

*I was immediately captivated. Arshay's writing evokes the emotional angst of teens growing up in the inner city of Chicago. It is a triumphant tale of overcoming odds, with the sport of rowing – not the conventional football or basketball – as a catalyst to his and his crew's salvation. I wholeheartedly recommend Arshay's work and look forward to his future projects. – Ron Stallworth, #1 New York Times bestselling author of Black Klansman*

*Arshay's remarkable story reminds us of the life-changing power of will over hopelessness, of belief over despair, and shows us what it looks like when we stop listening to demons and start honoring our own potential. This is the story of rising from the ashes stronger, faster, and focused – not in spite of the circumstances of birth but because of them. Arshay's refusal to let his life story be written for him is a testament to the resilience and beauty of the human spirit, and his eagerness to succeed, on the water and in life, is an inspiration. – Elizabeth Gilbert, New York Times bestselling author of Eat, Pray, Love and Big Magic*

*This is a story about triumphing over adversity, of mentorship and personal investment, of sports and endurance, and of faith – in yourself, in others, and your team.... In some ways this is a memoir of underdogs fighting their way to the top, but it's also about how an entire population is left out of the opportunity loop and how a seemingly small thing like sports can change lives. – Al Woodworth, Amazon Book Review*

*The sport made intense demands on the young men, requiring them to train hard, learn how to swim, and make countless sacrifices – including not reacting to the racist jeers from competitors and spectators. The experience turned a team of strangers into brothers and unleashed their potential. The book is as uplifting as its title suggests, and sections detailing the races are downright heart-pounding. – The Christian Science Monitor*

**[A Most Beautiful Thing](#)** is a moving, inspirational, true story of rising in the face of racism told through the lens of rowing. <>

## Literature & Fiction / Science Fiction

[A Borrowed Man](#) by Gene Wolfe (2015) (**A Borrowed Man, Book 1**: Tor Books)

[Interlibrary Loan](#) by Gene Wolfe (Book 2 of the Borrowed Man Series: Tor Books)

Hundreds of years in the future there are pockets of civilization and humans are few. There is advanced technology to sustain us. There are robots to do the heavy lifting. And there are reclones.

[Interlibrary Loan](#) is the follow-up to [A Borrowed Man](#), the final work of fiction from deceased multi-award winner and national literary treasure Gene Wolfe.

As in [A Borrowed Man](#), E. A. Smithe is a borrowed person; his personality an uploaded recording of a deceased mystery writer. Smithe is a piece of property, not a legal human.

As such in [Interlibrary Loan](#), Smithe can be loaned to other branches of the library. Which he is. Along with two fellow reclones, a cookbook writer and a romance writer, he is shipped to Polly's Cove, where Smithe meets a little girl who wants to save her mother, a father who is dead but perhaps not.

And another E.A. Smithe... who definitely is.

*Wolfe, a celebrated science-fiction writer who died in 2019, stretched the genre's boundaries in his rich and allusive work ... Wolfe deploys sci-fi and gothic elements – an interplanetary portal, a sentient house that builds itself – to explore the question that lies at the heart of many of his novels: What does it mean to be human and alive? – The New Yorker*

*Wolfe fans will spend a lot of time discussing this. All the best detective stories have clues buried deep in them. You need to look back and check for the ones you missed. It's an enigmatic final note from sci-fi's most enigmatic author. – The Wall Street Journal*

*Ambitious, imaginative, and packed with twists and turns, [Interlibrary Loan](#) is a major achievement from a legendary writer gone too soon. – Esquire.com*

*Complex and clever, this last offering from Wolfe is sure to please sci-fi readers. – Publishers Weekly*

*A winding tale... that will have readers going back looking for details they missed the first time around. This posthumous sequel to [A Borrowed Man](#) blends a hard-boiled mystery style with a sf future. – Library Journal*

*Gene Wolfe is as good a writer as there is today.... I feel a little bit like a musical contemporary attempting to tell people what's good about Mozart. – Chicago Sun-Times*

*If any writer from within genre fiction ever merited the designation Great Author, it is surely Wolfe .... [who] reads like Dickens, Proust, Kipling, Chesterton, Borges, and Nabokov rolled into one. – The Washington Post Book World*

*One of the literary giants of science fiction. – Denver Post*

Wolfe is a sophisticated stylist, and has more in common with writers such as Jorge Luis Borges than almost any science fiction writer both in terms of craft and themes. – *The Boston Globe*

A brilliant and sophisticated writer, Wolfe was a shining star gone too soon. His contributions will be missed by sci-fi fans. This set is a major achievement. [Interlibrary Loan](#) is a posthumous release. <>

## Music / Humor / Biographies & Memoirs

### [Music Lessons](#) by Bob Wiseman (ECW Press)

Bob Wiseman in [Music Lessons](#) says he believes most things in life are universal or, as Lauryn Hill says, everything is everything. Bearing in mind that advice, Wiseman writes about finding the link between music and daily life, like what is common between Mary Margaret O'Hara, hiding around the corner with the lights turned off in order to record herself and his 5-year-old insisting he stop hurrying to her dance lesson and marvel at the fluff ball she is blowing toward the ceiling.

Wiseman in [Music Lessons](#) says he likes having fun. He was on CNN lying about wanting to change his name to Prince; he played accordion on "If I Had \$1,000,000" by the Barenaked Ladies; he produced *Kid in the Hall: Bruce McCulloch's Shame-Based Man*; he was the composer for *The Drawer Boy*, winner of the 2018 Best Feature Film at the Canadian Film Awards; and Odetta took his hands in hers and kissed them after hearing him play prepared piano at the Bitter End on Earth Day 2000. He was also a founding member of Blue Rodeo but he quit in the early 90s when he no longer found it as much fun as when it started.

*Wiseman's bite-size anecdotes, koans, allegories and highly stylish fragments, torn either from his memoirs or the pages of user manuals for unknown appliances, are super-smart, hilarious, highly addictive and persistent in their insistence on lingering in the reader's mind long after first encounter! Bravo, Bob!* – Guy Maddin, filmmaker

Wiseman's [Music Lessons](#) belongs beside Sei Shonagan's *Pillow Book*, John Cage's 'one-minute stories,' and Eduardo Galeano's collections of stories. Equal parts wisdom and whimsy, these are 'lessons' for musicians, parents, artists and anyone who wants to learn better to pay attention. – Chris Cavanagh, Storyteller, The Catalyst Centre Popular Education Co-op

*A must-read for musicians, students of music, parents of students of music and anyone who's ever thought an MRI machine sounds like industrial ambient rock.* – Carolyn Taylor of *Baroness Von Sketch Show*

*o my, this is f--ing genius!!! Making me smile like a 2 month old baby farting!!! Real fu--ing cool style of writing. I'm sold on being amazed by page 2!* – Rami Jaffee of *Foo Fighters*

*Bob embodies the Toronto I lived in for ten years. Self-deprecating, artistically puritanical and totally comfortable wearing overalls at the bank.* – Graham Wagner, writer for *The Office* and *Portlandia*

[Music Lessons](#) is funny, tender and at times profound. It is a brilliant and unusual memoir of a life dedicated to music told by a silver-tongued storyteller. – Scott Thompson of *The Kids in the Hall*

Each entry in [Music Lessons](#) is unique and compellingly written, but the themes throughout – on improvisational music, life lessons, and conflict – are ubiquitous. <>

**Infinite Mobilization: Towards a Critique of Political Kinetics,**  
**1<sup>st</sup> English edition** by Peter Sloterdijk, translated by Sandra Berjan (Polity)

*Much of politics today is concerned with movement – from migration to the climate crisis. Written in the last years of the Cold War and shortly after the Chernobyl and Challenger disasters, Sloterdijk's reflections on political kinetics remain perceptive today.* – Stuart Elden, University of Warwick

The core of what we refer to as 'the project of modernity' is the idea that human beings have the power to bring the world under their control, and hence it is based on a 'kinetic utopia': the movement of the world as a whole reflects the implementation of our plans for it.

But, as told in [Infinite Mobilization](#), as soon as the kinetic utopia of modernity is exposed, its seemingly stable foundation cracks open and new problems appear: things don't happen according to plan because as we actualize our plans, we set in motion other things that we didn't want as unintended side-effects. We watch with mounting unease as the self-perpetuating side-effects of modern progress overshadow our plans, as a foreign movement breaks off from the very core of the modern project supposedly guided by reason and slips away from us, spinning out of control. What looked like a steady march towards freedom turns out to be a slide into an uncontrollable and catastrophic syndrome of perpetual mobilization. And precisely because so much comes about through our actions, these developments turn out to have explosive consequences for our self-understanding, as we begin to realize that, so far from bringing the world under our control, we are instead the agents of our own destruction. In [Infinite Mobilization](#) Peter Sloterdijk lays out the elements of this critical theory of modernity understood as a critique of political kinetics, shifting the focus of critical theory from production to mobilization and shedding light on a world facing the growing risk of humanly induced catastrophe.

Sloterdijk is Professor of Philosophy and Aesthetics at the Karlsruhe School of Design. He is one of the most influential philosophers writing today and is the author of many books including *The Critique of Cynical Reason*, *In the World Interior of Capital*, *Spheres, You Must Change Your Life* and *What Happened in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century?*

Sloterdijk in the Premises to [Infinite Mobilization](#) says that like all that he has previously published, the texts in the book are subversive exercises against the absolutism of history and socialization. Instead of orienting ourselves by the progressive norm that so quickly degenerates to a forward crawl, he recommends being attentive to sideways mobility. [Infinite Mobilization](#) contains a new version of critical theory in its embryonic form – not of 'society' but of the Western type of progressive process that is played out by modern societies. In the current world process, which exhibits an accelerated movement towards catastrophe, people – as the perpetrators and victims of mobilization – experience their predominant life form as something that leads the wrong way. In their characteristics as perpetrators, they at the same time learn of their ability to be so completely in agreement with the trend towards the wrong thing that they identify with it. Thus, a critical theory of mobilization is not just a translation of the critique of

alienation into a language of kinetics. One has to assume that within the most hazardous accelerations of the present, something is executed that stems from what is our own, what is closest to us – in other words, something self-intended. If this is the case, then a critical theory of society is no longer possible, since there is no actual difference between the critique itself and the object of that critique – unless the critique would first turn its thinking against itself and then also examine what is of one's own, nearest and self-intended, as well.

This kind of critique has so far only existed in the form of theology. Theologians have enjoyed the prerogative to critique the world as such in the name of an Other that is superior to the world, so that that which is one's own was also subject to criticism. In this book, Sloterdijk attempts to repeat a critique of this kind in a non-theological way. It is no wonder that serious tones predominate in [Infinite Mobilization](#). Other tones have joined the amoral cabaret that wanted to save itself from tragedy. The Teutonic vein in particular stands out more noticeably, weighing down the carefree cheer of the otherwise preferred Southern tone. Thin vibrations of Chinese elements add themselves to the mix and a fatal music of the spheres is barely perceptible against the death march of hardness, strength, skill. It would also be wrong to deny that, here and there, a Jewish cantor's world lament can be heard, for whom every manmade wall becomes a Wailing one. The dedication to Jacob Taubes – one of the last great representatives of the Jewish spirit in the German language – holds a commitment to the memory of apocalypticism as a Jewish alternative to the optimism of the moderns and the tragicism of neo-heroics.

Brilliant and insightful, Sloterdijk in [Infinite Mobilization](#) shifts the focus of critical theory from production to mobilization and sheds new light on a world facing the growing risk of humanly induced catastrophe. <>

## Religion & Spirituality / Occult

### [Elemental Magick](#): Reconnect with Nature through Spells, Rituals, and Meditations by D. J. Conway, with a foreword by Gabriela Herstik (Weiser Books)

Readers can learn to reconnect with the natural world using the magick of the five elements of earth, air, water, fire, and spirit – from [Elemental Magick](#), written by one of the grand dames of witchcraft and magick.

For more than a thousand years, alchemists and magicians have worked with the four elements of the universe. While most spiritual seekers have a basic knowledge of these four elements, and the more nebulous fifth element, spirit, few realize that the energies of the elements are a key to their magical practice.

[Elemental Magick](#) offers readers insight into the inner teachings of the elements. Author D. J. Conway explains in depth the forces behind the elements and how they provide a framework for literally everything in the universe. She also explains the all-important and powerful element of spirit that belongs to each of the other elements and how these intimate connections allow the magickal energy to flow in a continuous circle of existence. By learning how to work with and balance the elements and their spirits,

readers will better understand the larger process of balancing one's life with the world around them.

A native of the Pacific Northwest, Conway (1939–2019) studied the esoteric and occult fields of spiritual practice for more than 35 years. She authored over 30 books on magic, Wicca, Druidism, shamanism, metaphysics, and the occult, and three fantasy novels. There is something to be said about the way individuals discover magick. Of how it sneaks up on them in the shadows of the forest, or through staged Hollywood glamour. For many people, nature was their first introduction into the bewitching, teasing them with glimpses of what lies beyond. Conway's [Elemental Magick](#) invites readers deeper into this tale, leading the way to the Faery realm where they can explore and embrace the elements as living energies they can connect to in their everyday lives.

Gabriela Herstik in the introduction says her own path is intrinsically tied to the realm of the Faery, Elementals, and little people. When she was gifted a deck of Faery Oracle cards at eleven, she became deeply obsessed with the Fey and spent time learning about them in any way she could, eventually finding her way to witchcraft and later to Conway through her book *Celtic Magic*. And when she started her own journey of writing a book about connecting to the elements, she found her way to [Elemental Magick](#).

Herstik says that [Elemental Magick](#) is more than a book. It's a golden door opening to the edge of infinity. To the vast limitlessness of the universe. To the Faeries, Fey, Little People... whatever you want to call them. They're real, and they're waiting for readers to open their eyes. This book is the yellow brick road, the stepping stone into a relationship with the spirits of nature.

*[Elemental Magick](#) flawlessly weaves together history and folklore from around the world with comprehensive spells, rituals, and lists of magickal creatures associated with each of the elements. Whether you want to meditate with the sylph's, work with the fire elementals for spiritual growth, or break karmic ties, there is something for every magician, mystic, alchemist or shaman in this book. [Elemental Magick](#) has enriched my personal and professional life, and I hope it helps you blossom in bountiful and abundant ways as well. – Gabriela Herstik, author of *Inner Witch* and *Bewitching the Elements**

[Elemental Magick](#) sparks an ancient flame in readers' souls that reminds them of their innate connection to the natural world. [Elemental Magick](#) enriches readers' personal and professional lives, and helps them blossom in bountiful and abundant ways as well. It is a must-have for the green witch, for the oracle, for the priestess, for the animal lover.

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**Practicing the Great Perfection: Instructions on the Crucial Points** by Shechen Gyaltsap Gyurmé Pema Namgyal,  
translated by The Padmakara Translation Group  
(Shambhala Publications, Inc.)

**Practicing the Great Perfection** is a collection of essential instructions on the practice of Dzogchen, or The Great Perfection, from one of the great early 20<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist masters. The book, intended for the advanced Buddhist practitioner who has received initiation from a qualified master, provides the essential instructions of Dzogchen, the pinnacle of the Nyingma tradition.

Shechen Gyaltsap was widely recognized as one of the greatest meditation masters and most compassionate bodhisattvas in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. He lived a life of complete devotion and commitment to monastic discipline and study, and became the root teacher of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, who said of Shechen Gyaltsap's teachings that they were "worth more than all the gold in the entire world."

Shechen Gyaltsap (1871-1926), the fourth Shechen Gyaltsab (Gyaltsab IV), also known as Gyurmé Pema Namgyal, was one of Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche's closest disciples. He was recognized at a very young age to possess the qualities of a bodhisattva, and went on to become a devoted scholar, monastic, and teacher. He was known for his warmth and simplicity.

The Padmakara Translation Group, based in France, has a distinguished reputation for its translations of Tibetan texts and teachings. Its work has been published in several languages and is renowned for its clear and accurate literary style.

Shechen Gyaltsap left behind a substantial collection of writings, but little of it has been translated and made available to an English readership. His works translated in **Practicing the Great Perfection** for the first time are essential instructions for those who practice, or aspire to practice, the teachings of the Great Perfection. Written with a clear simplicity that belies their profundity, these teachings give practical and pointed advice on how to meditate on the nature of mind, self-arisen primordial wisdom, and how to sustain this practice in daily life. They begin with an extensive reflection on the problem of self clinging and the analytical meditation designed to uproot it, and proceed to more specific instructions for the mind practice itself, at all times insisting on the fundamental, indispensable attitudes of renunciation and bodhichitta – the determination to awaken for the benefit of all beings.

*Gyaltsap Rinpoche, as we call him, was the root teacher of my own beloved master Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. His knowledge and accomplishment of buddhadharma, especially of the Great Perfection, was equivalent to the mahasiddhas of the noble land of India. His instructions contain great blessings and will ripen seeds of understanding; allowing them to fully blossom into the realization of Samantabhadrahood that rests within all our hearts.... I am so glad that the Padmakara Translation Group has made this effort and truly thank them for their work from the bottom of my heart. – Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche*

Shechen Gyaltsap Gyurmé Pema Namgyal was a great master of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. [Practicing the Great Perfection](#) is a wonderful translation of his pith instructions, which point out the nature of practice and, ultimately, the nature of mind in a direct, unpretentious, and uncompromising way. It is my prayer that those who have the fortune to read this book will understand it correctly and become diligent in its practice. – Dilgo Khyentse Yangsi Rinpoche

Written with a clear simplicity that belies their profundity, these essential teachings as translated in [Practicing the Great Perfection](#) give practical and pointed advice on how students should meditate and behave in ordinary life. <>

## Religion & Spirituality / Zen Buddhism

### [Readings of Dōgen's "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye"](#) by Steven Heine (**Columbia Readings of Buddhist Literature Series**: Columbia University Press)

*The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye (Shōbōgenzō)* is the masterwork of Dōgen (1200–1253), founder of the Sōtō Zen Buddhist sect in Kamakura-era Japan. It is one of the most important Zen Buddhist collections, composed during a period of remarkable religious diversity and experimentation. The text is complex and compelling, famed for its eloquent yet perplexing manner of expressing the core precepts of Zen teachings and practice.

[Readings of Dōgen's "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye"](#) is a comprehensive introduction to this essential Zen text, offering a textual, historical, literary, and philosophical examination of Dōgen's treatise. Steven Heine explores the religious and cultural context in which the Treasury was composed and provides a detailed study of the various versions of the medieval text that have been compiled over the centuries. Heine is professor of religious studies and history and director of Asian studies at Florida International University.

Heine in [Readings of Dōgen's "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye"](#) includes nuanced readings of Dōgen's use of inventive rhetorical flourishes and the range of East Asian Buddhist textual and cultural influences that shaped the work. He explicates the philosophical implications of Dōgen's views on contemplative experience and attaining and sustaining enlightenment, showing the depth of his distinctive understanding of spiritual awakening.

*With clarifying beams of insight, Heine deftly evinces how Dōgen's teachings are a creative response to a range of Buddhist sutras, kōans, and Chinese and Japanese teachers. Illuminating with philosophical virtuosity the dynamic nature of Dōgen's written teachings and erudite explication of entangled versions of Dōgen's writings, Heine animates Dōgen's teachings and practices as he offers nuggets of sagacity throughout.* – Paula Arai, author of *Painting Enlightenment: Healing Visions of the Heart Sutra*

*Vigorous and insightful, [Readings of Dōgen's "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye"](#) provides a deep inspection of central themes in Dōgen's vast literal legacy. In a clear and inspiring manner, Heine's analysis sheds crucial light that clarifies both the beauty and complexity of this giant Zen Master.* – Eitan Bolokan, Tel Aviv University

*Heine has written a comprehensive, detailed, and accessible analysis of the textual, religious, and philosophical intricacies of Dōgen's master work, Shōbōgenzō. This careful work of synthesis builds on his own original scholarship on Zen and the Shōbōgenzō itself, and is one of the most thorough overviews of Dōgen's thought to date. – Richard Jaffe, author of Seeking Sakyamuni: South Asia in the Formation of Japanese Buddhism*

*Heine illuminates Dōgen's innovative re-readings of Zen tradition, highlighting his insights into 'being-time' and the 'oneness of practice realization.' Grounded in recent scholarship and embracing historical, literary, and practice perspectives, this comprehensive treatment of the Treasury will be welcomed by Dōgen enthusiasts and others interested in Japanese Buddhism. – Jacqueline Stone, author of Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*

*A foremost Dōgen expert's long-awaited, thorough, and comprehensive examination of the sublime thinker whose monumental elucidation of dharma is beginning to inspire meditators and beyond worldwide. – Kazuaki Tanahashi, author of Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*

*Shōbōgenzō, Dōgen's brilliant guidebook for the practice of Zen, is now widely recognized as one of Buddhism's greatest masterworks. The importance of the text and its complex difficulties cannot be overemphasized. Steven Heine's **Readings** provides excellent guidance through the text's crucial issues. Truly, a monumental achievement – now the best book on Dōgen. – Dale S. Wright, author of Buddhism: What Everyone Needs to Know*

[Readings of Dōgen's "Treasury of the True Dharma Eye"](#) will give students and other readers a full understanding of this fundamental work of world religious literature. <>

Travel / History / Britain

## [Northumberland](#): Romans to Victorians by Craig Armstrong (Visitors' Historic Britain Series: Pen & Sword History)

Northumberland... to the Romans it was Ad Fines, the limit of the Empire, the end of the Roman World.

According to Craig Armstrong in [Northumberland](#), Northumberland is where, in 122 AD, the Emperor Hadrian decided to build a wall stretching from coast-to-coast to provide protection, to show the might of the Empire, and as a statement of his grandeur. Visitors to Northumberland can walk the Wall visiting milecastles, Roman frontier forts and settlements such as Housesteads (where visitors can see the oldest toilets they will ever see) or Vindolanda (where visitors can take part in an archaeological dig) where wooden tablets detailing life on this frontier (the oldest example of written language in Britain) were discovered, or the remains of Roman temples and shrines (such as the Mithraeum at Carrawburgh). After the Romans left, Northumberland became the heart of one of the greatest kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon Britain, Northumbria, the home of Saints, scholars and warrior kings. Visitors can see the ancient seat of this kingdom at the medieval Bamburgh Castle, visit Hexham Abbey (built in 674 AD), or tour the magnificent remains of the 7<sup>th</sup> century Priory at Tynemouth (where three kings are buried – Oswin (d. 651), Osred (d. 790), and the Scottish King Malcolm III (d. 1093)). The author of [Northumberland](#), Craig Armstrong was born and bred in Northumberland. Armstrong is an experienced historian with a special interest in the history of the North

East of England and the Anglo-Scottish Borders. He has expertise in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century history with a particular focus on social and military history. Armstrong currently splits his time between teaching at Newcastle University and working as a freelance researcher and writer on the history of North East England and Scotland.

As told in [Northumberland](#), no other county in Britain has as many medieval remains as Northumberland. From the most grand such as Alnwick Castle (known as the Windsor of the North, the home of the Dukes of Northumberland, the capital of Northumberland, and, to many, Hogwarts!) to humble remains such as the Chantry at Morpeth. At Warkworth visitors can tour the medieval church (scene of a 12<sup>th</sup> century Scottish massacre), Warkworth Castle (another Percy possession and the setting for a scene in Shakespeare's Henry IV), a medieval hermitage, and the fortified bridge gatehouse (one of the only surviving examples in Britain).

Northumberland was ravaged during the Anglo-Scottish Wars and this led to the development of family clans of Border Reivers who were active during the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Raiders, looters, blackmailers and courageous cavalymen, the Reivers have left many surviving remnants of their harsh time. Peel Towers dot the landscape alongside Bastle Houses. The active can even walk in the footsteps of the Reivers by following the Reivers Way long distance path.

Victorian Northumberland was dominated by both farming and, increasingly, by the industrial genius of some of its entrepreneurs. The greatest of these, Lord Armstrong (known as the Magician of the North), has left behind one of the most magnificent tourist sites in Britain; his home at Craggside. Carved from a bare hillside and transplanted with millions of trees and shrubs and crowned with the beautiful Craggside House, visitors can walk the grounds, taking advantage of various trails and spotting wildlife such as red squirrels before visiting the first house in the world to be lit by electricity!

Northumberland is now a predominantly rural, peaceful county renowned for having more castles than any other county in Britain, for its fabulously dramatic scenery and for its beautiful and unspoiled coastline. As of June 2017 the population of Northumberland was just 319,030, meaning that it is one of the least populated counties in Britain with an average population density of just sixty-four people per square kilometer, compared to a national average of 427 and a northeast average of 308.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries especially, the county was home to many entrepreneurs who went on to have impressive careers which left their mark on society, including the father of the railways, a great weapons designer, and farming innovators. Northumberland is incredibly rich in heritage and history, making it a must-visit for tourists and the book, a must-read for potential visitors. [Northumberland](#) is well illustrated with many black and white photographs. <>

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