

The Atlas of Food: Who Eats What, Where, and Why. Edited by Erik Millstone and Tim Lang. 128 pp. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 2008. \$19.95 (paper).

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Often a picture, or a figure, is worth a thousand words. That tenet holds true for *The Atlas of Food*, an updated and revised volume in a series that includes endangered species, climate change, health, and religion. Unlike many a weighty atlas, this one has an accessible and visually appealing format for presenting graphically an array of sobering data and trends. Forty themes are provided grouped within sections designated as contemporary challenges, farming, trade and processing, retailing and consumption. Human health indices like obesity rates, number of meals eaten out, levels of alcohol use, and liver disease are included along with environmental and structural criteria like inequities in distribution, future river flows, and depletion of fish stocks. Taken together, they yield considerable insights into the scope and complexities of critical matters, the interconnectness of human health with the world's food systems, and other global political and economic developments.

The atlas includes a number of creative avenues for visualizing information. Comparative emissions are provided for transport by ship compared to air. Nutrition shifts reveal a steep climb in consumption of animal products, sugars, and sweeteners and are effectively set against figures revealing an explosion in the sheer number of invented flavoring agents and an alarming growth in pesticides, fumigants, and chemical fertilizers entering our soils, waters, and bodies. Other useful ways to present data include trends in "burgerization" and in disproportionate advertising for fatty and sugary foods compared to balanced diets.

Not all domains are easy to depict or map; however, the impact of climate change is so vast that having to select from so many potential indices is inevitably unsatisfactory, while visualization of the critical dimensions of fair trade or citizen activism is scanty at best. Topics are modestly sourced, including mainly electronic and internet resources. Tables are also included for national data on agriculture (such as extension of arable land, levels of agrochemical use, meat production) and consumption (including access to water and indices of undernourishment and overnourishment).

For younger generations steeped in visual inputs, this atlas is an ideal entry point for stimulating interest and further investigation. For all its depressing topics—from numbers of species at risk, to the lunacy with which bloated trade volumes are subsidized with little regard for the health of natural systems—this small volume also conveys a good deal of hope. Varied urban farming practices and growing emphasis on organic production provide just two positive trends, revealing that the irrevocable link between food and power can also shift from inequities and dependencies to systems that are vastly more sustainable and just.

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The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings. Edited by David F. Lancy. xii + 466 pp. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. 2008. \$99.00 (cloth).

Lancy's book demonstrates that the anthropological study of childhood is a rich field of inquiry, contrary to recent suggestions (Hirschfeld, 2002). This book draws on an impressive expanse of literature and sketches a picture of the diversity of childhood around the world. Anthropological descriptions of non-Western childhood and child development are often overlooked outside of anthropology. Lancy demonstrates remarkably well that the lives of children and children's culture are far from uniform. What is frequently considered normal childhood and child development in fields outside of anthropology is culture-bound and often, as Lancy frequently points out, on the fringe of any normal distribution. Lancy effectively argues that a cross-cultural and holistic view of childhood is necessary and provokes the reader to question and reevaluate assumptions about childhood.

The book is generally organized along the early human life course, from reproduction through adolescence. Although, repeated many times throughout the book, what represents or characterizes these stages can vary across cultures. The initial chapters focus on reproduction and infancy into early childhood. The chapters then move through early, middle, and late childhood exploring learning, play, and work. The latter part of the book explores adolescence, with added chapters on schooling and the value of an anthropological perspective for research on childhood.

Lancy successfully integrates evolutionary and cultural perspectives on childhood. This theoretical coalescence is particularly evident in the early chapters, where Lancy weaves together recent work in evolutionary anthropology and human biology with more traditional ethnographic studies of childhood. In Chapter 2 entitled "To make a child", he argues that fertility is universally valued, but the outcome of reproduction rarely leads to an American style neontocracy, the elevation of children to cherubs and a god-like state. He presents the history of Western families covering topics such as marriage, pregnancy and childbirth, differential investment in sexes, and the demographic transition, and contrasts it with the diversity of children's experiences around the world. Following the lead of the previous chapter, Chapter 3, "A child's worth", describes, through historical and current descriptions of childhood, how such disparate views on children—cherubs, chattel, and changelings—have developed. Chapter 4, "It Takes a Village", explores the social world of infants and children. Most child development literature remains focused on the mother/infant dyad or the nuclear family, but Lancy illustrates that cross-culturally, caregiving responsibilities are spread widely among individuals, each of whom possess varied capacities and skills. In fact, biological parents often take a backseat to childminding,

particularly as children move out of infancy into their toddler years.

"Making sense" (Chapter 5) explores how cultures approach child development, their ability to learn, and become competent members of society. He cites a range of folk wisdom on child development from the new trend of American mothers offering learning experiences to their fetuses (i.e., playing classical music to their offspring in the womb), to the belief that children are less than complete humans or members of society, and are thus incapable of learning social and cultural rules until they are five to seven years of age. The patterns and developmental implications of play, both in humans and nonhuman primates, are examined in Chapter 6, "Of marbles and morals". In addition, Lancy illustrates the varied responses and participation of adults in child play. Chapter 7, "His first goat", reviews young children's participation in labor, at an age when many American families do not consider their children capable of walking to the end of the block unsupervised. There is increasing international opinion that critiques child labor, but Lancy argues that most children's work and contributions to the family economy are vital and culturally acceptable. However, he is careful to differentiate children's longstanding participation in traditional labor from the emerging situation that children face in the global market. As populations increase, causing stress on families, and the global market reaches further into traditional communities, children are moved from participating in family economic activities to being sold or sent to work in unsafe conditions, thus, leaving the protection of their communities.

The transition to adolescence is explored in "Living in limbo" (Chapter 8), a time when the diversity of experience for children around the world seems the greatest. Sexual maturity is reached during adolescence, but community acceptance of adolescents into adult status may be years away. Lancy emphasizes this state of limbo varies widely by culture and the sex of the adolescent. He presents contrasting cases ranging from young women being married shortly after puberty, to a middle-class American style of adolescence, characterized as hyperextended (at times lasting into the third decade) and describes also the variety of cultural institutions and practices created to manage this "difficult" human life stage. Lancy then details in Chapter 9, entitled "How schools can raise property values", the rise of formal schooling around the world, how societies have adopted this institution, and its effects on children and communities.

In the concluding chapter, "Suffer the children", he presents headline grabbing topics, such as high-fertility in the face of poverty, child labor, orphans, street children, and child soldiers. He explores child agency and the unease with which policy and aid organizations approach these children, because they rarely resemble the cherub-like state that dominates our thinking. In addition, he lays a foundation for how anthropological perspectives may be utilized as we contend with the myriad of issues facing children in a global age. In Lancy's concluding remarks, he points to the moral obligation of the developed world to play a role in the lives of children around the globe. Children are shown to be remarkably resilient and adapted to their local communities, but the pressures of the world market are taking their toll. The implementation of policy that emphasizes a neotocracy will fail to address the needs and conditions that children face.

In a recent conversation with a Human Development graduate student, she explained to me that her graduate class on child development only spent one week exploring childhood from a cross-cultural perspective, and the cross-cultural discussion was restricted to examples from developed, industrialized nations. Unfortunately, it is this limited and culture-bound view of childhood which often informs policy around the world. This conversation only reinforced my opinion that there is an urgent need for a holistic view of childhood, an opinion likely shared by all anthropologists studying childhood. Lancy's book does an excellent job moving us toward this goal. *The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings* will be a valuable addition to the classroom, exposing students to the variety of childhoods around the world. It will also serve as an excellent reference for scholars of childhood, both within and, more importantly, outside of anthropology.

LITERATURE CITED

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The Ethics of Protocells: Moral and Social Implications of Creating Life in the Laboratory. Edited by Mark A. Bedau and Emily C. Parke. xii + 368 pp. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2009. \$55.00 (Cloth), \$28.00 (Paper).

"In what way is the synthesis of a cell less admissible than the synthesis of a molecule?" asked the French biophysicist Stéphane Leduc one hundred years ago (Leduc, 1912, p. 14). This laconic question summarizes the issues addressed in *The Ethics of Protocells*, a collective work offering a wide panorama of the social and ethical aspects of current attempts to synthesize life. Leduc pursued the synthesis of life forms by using mineral ingredients within an explicit materialistic (or rather antivitalistic) tradition, as did the Mexican scientist Alfonso L. Herrera. Their empirical ingenuity, which contrasted even with their contemporary colleagues, and the mocking and forced oblivion of their work by the official history of biology should not hide their intimate ambition, i.e., the synthetic approach rather than the analytical one would be the best way to answer the question of "what is life." At that time, the German-American physiologist Jacques Loeb was one of many to whom it seemed obvious that the understanding of the nature of life will be the outcome of its fabrication: "there is no reason to predict that abiogenesis [the synthesis of living matter from inert matter] is impossible, and I believe that it can only help science if the younger