

trauma of war. Its major conclusion that reuniting the past and present selves is not achievable in any simple way is important for those engaged in therapeutic work as well as for literary theorists to consider.

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SETTING AN IMPORTANT AND POSITIVE TONE

Citizenship: personal lives and social policy. Gail Lewis, editor, 2004. Milton Keynes and Bristol: Open University and Polity Press; ISBN 1861345216, 184 pp., £17.99 paper.

In the spirit of being ‘Open to people, places, methods and ideas’, the Open University with this book has again confirmed its commitment to this ethos by its responsiveness to an urgent and growing lacuna in the third-level social policy and politics curriculum: the presence and experience of the ‘user’ in social care provision. *Citizenship: personal lives and social policy* – one of four core texts in the Open University course *Personal lives and social policy* – represents a bold initiative to ‘explore the relationship between personal lives and social policy’ through the ‘lens’ of citizenship, using what the authors commonly refer to as ‘personal lives’ research methods. In an area of scholarship that has lately been dominated by the macro-theoretical and quantitative influence of globalization and the international patterning of ‘race’, gender and migration to map subsequent changes to national identities and the systematic transformation of the welfare state, this book represents a welcome shift of critical attention back onto the level of the personal and the domain of lived, everyday life. Overall, it marks an auspicious moment in life narrative research with respect to its penetration into the wider field of social and political theory and praxis.

Divided into four main sections, the authors use the ‘personal lives’ approach to explore and contest the discourses of entitlement and belonging through a variety of policy initiatives that have collectively determined rights to housing, education and asylum in the UK since the Second World War. Among the laudable aspects of this book is its reflexive immediacy in implementing its own designated objective. Straightaway in Chapter 1, entitled “‘Do not go gently’...”, editor Gail Lewis introduces the reader to the complex and mutually constitutive terrain of social provision and personal need by recounting an episode from her own life history. Related in a manner that is at once deeply personal and yet integral to the aim of the book, Lewis successfully draws critical attention to the inter-subjective dynamics of ‘race’, sexuality, home and intergenerational

relationships in the interface between real life individuals and social services. For a British academic who is revealing part of her past as well as the individual and subjective viewpoint, this is accomplished with a commendable lack of embarrassment either to persons or to theory. As an example of life narrative research praxis, and in conjunction with the imperative for social researchers to aspire to ever greater levels of reflexivity and mutuality in practice, this works well, setting a positive tone for how conceptualization and analysis are to proceed according to this alternative way of thinking and acting, noting its divergence away from the traditional legitimacy of authority for those who implement and shape social policy.

Where the book is perhaps less successful is in its efforts to provide readers/students with a sufficiently comprehensive theoretical background on the political history and idea of citizenship. The concept of citizenship in modern political theory is of signal importance, a complex cultural and historical notion that requires substantive attention as a focal point in its own right. While the personal lives methodology is effectively woven into the fabric of the text, the treatment of and debates over citizenship are less rigorous and adequate. Though the chapter devoted to this does an admirable job of relating the richness of the notion of citizenship in the UK since the postwar period, its concentration on Anglophone political philosophies of citizenship and the nation state severely limit its conceptual scope. The noticeable inclusion of Gramsci in this section serves to illustrate the tendency among English-speaking scholars to conflate social and political theory on the continent with Marxism. In a text that seeks to reclaim subjective experience, a less structuralist point of view more in line with the Christian/social democratic tradition on the continent would probably have been better. What is more, considering the increased tendency of charitable and other organizations in the UK to represent the views of service users in by reference to European Social Law and EU Human Rights legislation in order to argue their cases in response to government consultation initiatives, such a concentration on these other theories of citizenship and community would seem to be recommended.

Another major problem with this book is the rather unreflective use of the 'personal lives' methodology itself. While there is considerable criticism of '... the dominant or official discourses, echoed by the media, [and its] focus on evidence, often described as "facts", which is used to justify every harsher procedures and removal of welfare services and benefits' (p. 152), the critical lens never seems to turn itself back onto the meaning of the individual testimony or personal experience as an alternative theoretical standpoint. Though these stories are powerful and thought-provoking in their potential to 'humanize' social policy, laudable as this is,

in an academic contest it only goes so far. Such an ostensibly methodical usage of ‘personal lives’ only works to the extent that it convinces people who were already likely to share these views; others may simply reject them as idiosyncratic, and all are likely to eventually become immune to their persuasive powers. The effectiveness of the authors’ implementation of life narrative methodology would be greatly enhanced by a more conscious and theoretically reflexive treatment of the form, which readers of this journal will know has been the object of considerable scholarly labour and debate, especially over the last quarter century.

Overall, I enjoyed this book and would recommend it. I have no doubt that in response to students’ input, subsequent editions of the text will overcome some of these theoretical oversights, making it an even better read.

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INTERCONNECTIONS OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

States of knowledge: the co-production of science and social order. S. Jasanoff, editor, 2004. London: Routledge; ISBN 041533361X, 317 pp., £70.00 cloth.

States of knowledge seeks to explore the relationship between scientific knowledge, culture and political power through a series of essays that utilize knowledge as a resource. The book’s main organizing principle is that of co-production – that the natural and social orders work together to produce one another; and that the way we understand the world and choose to live in it are interconnected. The book examines the potential of the integration of science, power and culture and how this can extend the language of the social sciences, whilst highlighting the importance of science and technology studies to ‘modern’ life.

Science and technology constantly impact upon human interaction and Jasanoff uses the Y2K millennium bug and the collapse of the World Trade Center towers in New York on 11 September 2001 to illustrate this. She then goes on to further demonstrate that though science and technology impact upon human relations, humankind has yet to master nature and the AIDs epidemic, global climate change, ageing and infertility are amongst her examples of the social order’s powerlessness against nature. What are the responses to this? How do we analyse these responses? The book claims that the social sciences do not – at present – have the tools to explain these interactions and: ‘Conversations between S&TS and