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The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 36

Issue 4 December - Special Issue on People
with Disabilities and Social Welfare

Article 13

2009

Review of *Autobiography and Decolonization: Modernity, Masculinity and the Nation State*. Philip Holden. Reviewed by James Midgley.

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Recommended Citation

Midgley, James (2009) "Review of *Autobiography and Decolonization: Modernity, Masculinity and the Nation State*. Philip Holden. Reviewed by James Midgley.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 36: Iss. 4, Article 13.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.3480>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol36/iss4/13>

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professional experiences to clarify topics discussed. In addition to case examples, McKenzie also provides additional sources for further reading and a list of films and movies that demonstrate the topics discussed.

However, there are two drawbacks of the book. McKenzie presents a variety of situations and behaviors in which adolescents are referred for therapy and discusses interventions to treat identity crisis issues, mental health issues, gender issues, substance use and abuse, self harming behaviors, and eating disorders. However, McKenzie fails to mention interventions that can be incorporated into practice with pregnant and parenting adolescents. Adolescent parents have unique circumstances and needs; therefore, they require unique interventions. A second notable drawback is that the chapter on culturally competent practice is inadequate. Although the author acknowledges that one chapter can not cover all the techniques needed to work with diverse populations, more than one ethnic group should have been represented in the case example. Cultural competence is critical in that a significant number of clients that social workers serve are minorities. This chapter could have been expanded. However, readers will gain a comprehensive understanding of the techniques and skills that are grounded in theory to work with adolescents that enter therapy with a variety of circumstances and issues. Professors can use this book as a teaching tool with students and practitioners can use the book as a reference tool for their practice with adolescent clients.

Nila Ricks, University of Texas at Arlington

Philip Holden, *Autobiography and Decolonization: Modernity, Masculinity and the Nation-State*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008. \$55.00 hardcover.

In an age dominated by visual imagery, it may be difficult to appreciate the extent to which the print media previously informed popular opinion. In the absence of cinema, television and internet images, popular attitudes and beliefs were shaped by newspapers, novels, magazines and works of non-fiction such as biographies and autobiographies. Of course,

these publications also reflected popular attitudes and beliefs. By analyzing this literature, scholars have not only obtained powerful insights into the cultural and social values of past societies but have shown how prevailing values, norms and social structures were perpetuated. In addition, they have shown how the print media was used to construct new attitudes and social values that suited the interest of particular segments of society.

It is in this context that Philip Holden examines the role of autobiographies in shaping popular attitudes during the imperial and postcolonial eras. Drawing on the insights of postmodernist, feminist and postcolonial scholarship, he contends that the autobiographies of key nationalist independence leaders such as Gandhi, Nkrumah, Nehru, Lee Kuan Yew and Mandela played a vital role in nation building. These autobiographies were widely read and helped fire the imaginations of millions of people. They also played a vital role in the construction of national identity and in the conception of what constituted the emergent nation. Although these texts span many decades and attracted both national and international attention at different times during the process of decolonization, they share many common features. One of the most significant, Holden believes, is the emphasis on masculinity as reflected in frequent references to the masculinity of the independence leader, and in the subtle ways notions of masculinity pervaded these different autobiographies. Holden provides many fascinating examples which bolstered the image of the nationalist leader as a strong, determined, self-controlled and dependable man. The masculinity of the leader, in turn, was extrapolated to the emerging notion of the new nation as strong, forward-looking, resolute and responsible. These developments, he points out, were not only driven by the personal dispositions of the independence leaders themselves, but by the wider imperial project which was permeated with notions of masculinity and patriarchy.

This is a work of prodigious scholarship which provides powerful insights into the lives of the leaders who shaped the postcolonial era. It is meticulously documented and demonstrates an impressive ability to incorporate the theoretical insights of contemporary scholarship into an analysis of what may appear to be the fairly mundane task of analyzing

autobiographical texts. It will contribute significantly to an understanding of the role of the nationalist leaders in the struggle for independence, and the way the postcolonial era was constructed through the shared imagination of these leaders and their followers.

James Midgley, University of California, Berkeley

Alain Noël and Jean-Philippe Thérien, *Left and Right in Global Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. \$28.00 papercover.

Although the left and right divide is popular in political discourse and analyses, its meaning and usefulness remain contested. Split on whether or not the left-right divide is still relevant for contemporary politics, political science literature also offers alternative positions. Whereas the left-right divide is closely associated with Western democracies, its applicability to non-Western and non-democratic countries has been questioned. Alain Noël and Jean-Philippe Thérien join this dialogue proposing that the left-right divide forms the core of global politics, and "makes contemporary politics intelligible, within, but also beyond, the boundaries of nation-states" (p. 3). They add that the left-right divide changes through time and space.

The authors suggest that to fully understand the influence of the left-right divide, readers need to view it as a social fact, which in spite of being "abstract and constructed socially" has profound influence on individual and collective behavior uniting different actors across space and time. After an informative delineation of the left-right divide, controversies and caveats in explaining global politics, they turn to empirical evidence to illustrate the significance of the left-right divide. The authors use a mix of historical analyses and survey evidence, to persuasively illustrate how the left-right divide has influenced individual and collective perceptions and attitudes about equality, redistribution, the role of the state, world affairs, development, multiculturalism, terrorism and the environment.

For example, chapter two presents data on left-right self-placement surveys from 78 countries, highlighting