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Review of *Realizing Rights: Transforming Approaches to Sexual & Reproductive Well-Being*. Andrea Cornwall and Alice Welbourn (Eds.) Reviewed by Carol Tully.

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Another poignant theme in the book is the transformative aspect of grief. Time and again respondents reported that the loss of their loved one had made them different—better—people. As one respondent put it, “What doesn’t kill you makes you strong.” In a truly post-modern interpretation, Walters describes this as the process of “making meaning from the experience.” Thus she deftly sidesteps the question of whether profound loss “really” does make us stronger, more patient, more in tune with life’s priorities, more spiritually aware . . . or whether we just need to believe this to justify our massive suffering.

The reader will not find this book an outstanding example of in-depth qualitative research. The sample is small and homogenous along dimensions of race and class. Results tend to confirm the author’s expectations, and causal assumptions are not subjected to careful critical analysis. This does not detract from the clinical and practical significance of Walter’s contribution. The book offers a strong, clear theoretical framework, thoughtful integration of the relevant literature, and unusually perceptive insights into the clinical implications of the cases considered. *The Loss of a Life Partner* will be a valuation addition to professional libraries and a useful tool for instruction.

Amanda Smith Barusch
University of Utah

Andrea Cornwall and Alice Welbourn (Eds.), *Realizing Rights: Transforming Approaches to Sexual & Reproductive Well-being*. New York: Zed Books, 2003. \$49.95 hardcover, \$16.95 paper-cover.

Each morning I have a cup of coffee as I expect many of you do. What I noticed recently was that my morning coffee had been grown and harvested in Zimbabwe. Until reading Cornwall and Welbourn’s book I took my coffee for granted, never really thinking about the people who grew and harvested the beans and the hardships they endure. *Realizing Rights* is an exploration by 37 authors from across the globe that presents evaluative data related to a variety of programs targeted at HIV-AIDS, environmental issues affecting breast cancer, sexual, reproductive health, teenage

pregnancy, and others. More than one of the chapters is related to these issues as faced by those in Zimbabwe.

Divided into four parts, this 322-page book deals with *human rights* as opposed to *legal rights* and explores a number of programs in each section. The first, 'Voices and Choices', presents six programs (in areas that include the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Zambia) designed to provide strategies for traditionally disenfranchised minorities (children and youth, sex workers, cancer patients, those with HIV-AIDS) to recognize their human rights and to then become a participant in decisions that affect them—in other words, to find their voices and thereby make informed choices. Part two explores programs related to changing norms and moving beyond individual changes in behavior. The five chapters in this section are all related to the AIDS pandemic as experienced primarily in Africa and programs designed to deal with the issue. Part three, 'Informing Choices, Transforming Messages', includes various ways people can use their unique cultural settings to create materials and policies that are meaningful to them. By using individual cultures, each with its own way of defining the issues, people give voice to that which they think important and do so in a *language* that has meaning for them. For example, one project describes how the hip-hop culture and radio was used in South Africa to inform those listening about HIV-AIDS. The six projects that are discussed in this section provide an interesting array and come from Brazil, Estonia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The final section, 'Building Responsiveness', explore various entry points for those providing direct services. These last six chapters focus primarily on women's issues—pregnancy in India, reproductive health in Nepal, sexual and child health in the Andes, teenage pregnancy in the United Kingdom, motherhood in Myanmar, and women's health in Egypt.

Realizing Rights made me expand my thinking beyond my comfort zone—Louisville, Kentucky and the United States. It made me aware of 23 programs in the world that are making a difference in the lives of those they touch and it provided me with new ways of thinking about things I often take for granted (like my coffee). As an educator, I immediately tried to think of where this book (or parts of it) could be used in the social work curriculum. This is where I ran into a bit of a stumbling

block for, although pieces of the book would seem to have great utility in human behavior, social welfare policies and services, diversity, and even research classes, I was not able to see how the entire book would fit into any single course. Rather than include programs in the United States, *Realizing Rights* offers a look at programs most of us in this country would tend to ignore. Its global perspective and international authorship are its strengths. While I had somewhat of a difficult time with the numerous acronyms used in each chapter, learning what WEN, PLA, LNGO, SHEASS and IWAG stood for was part of the journey through the book. As this is an edited book, the writing styles from chapter to chapter fluctuate from excellent to mediocre and I would have found it helpful had the editors included transitional text between each of the four major parts. In sum, this is an interesting book that has utility in a variety of social work classes (both at the BSW and MSW levels) but users will need to screen it before using it.

Carol Tully

University of Louisville

Elyn R. Saks, *Refusing Care: Forced Treatment and the Rights of the Mentally Ill*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. \$35.00 hardcover, \$24.50 papercover.

Legal scholar and trained psychoanalyst, Elyn Saks acknowledges several times throughout her book that treatment refusal, the topic of this most recent treatise, is *not* the most pressing issue in mental health today, rather societal *neglect* and our *lack of will* to provide adequate community treatment to those who need and want it *is*. Nevertheless, she persuasively purports that a detailed exploration of the “overinterventionalist pole” in the pendulum swing of mental health care is important as well. I am completely convinced. As I read, I began to see this contribution as a provocative demonstration of the centrality of choice in mental health service delivery. Indeed, one of the most refreshing aspects of the book is her implicit argument that the humanity and dignity of clients should be at the center of the mental health system, and should dictate our structures of decision-making about care and treatment. Saks helps us imagine what that would look like. And what could be more important than that.