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**Review of *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed at Home*. Lynellyn D. Long and Ellen Oxfeld (Eds.).
Reviewed by Miriam Potocky-Tripodi.**

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In summary, this book presents convincing evidence that the daily lives of our children and young people are even more media-saturated than we may have suspected. It is no longer much disputed among media scholars that the influence of the mass media is at least as powerful as the other principal socialization institutions—families, schools and churches. Not all media influences are pernicious, of course, but some clearly are and, given the all-pervading and rapidly-changing nature of our children's exposure, it behooves us to pay attention. This book helps focus that attention by providing a comprehensive picture of the media environment in which our children live and how they budget their time among the large and growing array of media options available to them.

Allan Brawley
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Lynellyn D. Long and Ellen Oxfeld (Eds.), *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants and Those Who Stayed at Home*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. \$42.00 hardcover, \$14.00 papercover.

Historically, immigration has been a one-way street. Emigrants and exiles rarely returned to their homelands—the former, often because the economic costs of the journey were prohibitive; the latter, because of political prohibitions. When returns were made, they often took the form of pilgrimages; like the Islamic injunction to visit Mecca once in a lifetime, most immigrants have felt a pull to see their birthplace once before they die. In other cases, such as persons displaced by World War II, refugees returned to discover that there was nothing to return to, and thus they were compelled to migrate yet again.

This situation, however, has changed dramatically in the past twenty years. Economic and political revolutions around the globe have given rise to entirely new categories of world citizens—transnationals, who regularly cross borders and cross lives between their old and new countries; and repatriates, who have permanently returned to their homelands. The scholarship of immigration and exile is only now beginning to catch up to this

reality. As such, Long and Oxfeld's edited volume represents an important advance in the field.

The book begins with an introduction that establishes the scope and context of the phenomenon of return. The purpose of the book is presented as a collection of ethnographic case studies intended to illuminate the phenomenological, political, social, economic, and cultural sequelae of returns. The editors then present a rudimentary framework for the analysis of returns, dividing them into three categories: imagined, provisional, and repatriated returns.

The subsequent three sections of the book are organized in accordance with this framework. Part I examines imagined returns. These include a case study, told through letters, of a male Rwandan war refugee; a study of Eritreans resettled in North America and Europe; and an analysis of the self-portrayals sent by Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong to their families at home. Part II addresses provisional returns. Included are a study of young Vietnamese returnees; an examination of returns to a Chinese village from the perspective of the villagers who did not leave; and a chapter that presents the stories of several Hong Kong domestic workers who have made periodic returns to their native Philippines. In Part III, permanent returns are examined from a diversity of perspectives and locales, including the post-war situations in Germany, Nicaragua, Sarajevo, and Ethiopia; and returns of West Indians to Barbados.

The book achieves its stated purpose of illuminating the experience of return from multiple perspectives. The chapters all do a fine job of illustrating the myriad conflicts that characterize this phenomenon: internal identity conflicts of the returnees; social conflicts between returnees and stayees; and conflicts between policy goals and manifest realities, among others. The descriptions of the individuals' experiences are vivid, compelling, and clearly recounted with compassion. However, these personal accounts sometimes get buried in what seem to be overly minute details of military, insurgent, and political maneuvers, which become an alphabet soup of acronyms of the various groups.

This book is likely to be of interest to anthropologists and area studies specialists.

However, it may be somewhat disappointing to social researchers and social workers. There is a significant lack of methodological description in all of the chapters. Details about issues such as participant selection, interview content, data recording, and analytic methods are largely missing, creating questions about the authenticity and credibility of the findings, as well as limiting replicability by others who may wish to study this topic. Additionally, there is a lack of an overarching theoretical explanatory framework, apart from the rudimentary typology of returns. Social workers will be disappointed by the absence of articulated policy, programmatic, and practice implications of the findings.

Nonetheless, as stated earlier, this book is an important step forward in immigrant and exile studies and establishes a starting point for further work. As one who is at this moment aboard a flight back from a provisional return to the homeland I left thirty-five years ago, and one who readily recognizes the phenomenological and social nuances portrayed in this volume, I applaud the editors and chapter authors for illuminating this minority experience.

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James J. Heckman and Alan B. Krueger, *Inequality in America: What Role for Human Capital Policies?* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004. \$40.00 cloth.

Income inequality has increased substantially during the last three decades, reversing the trend toward more equal incomes that characterized much of the twentieth century. According to the introduction to this book, since 1974, the share of income going to families in the top fifth of the income distribution has increased from 41 to 48 percent, while the share going to the bottom fifth has declined from 6 to 4 percent. Much of this increase in inequality may be attributed to a growing wage gap between highly-educated and less-educated individuals. Those with the most education have seen their incomes increase, while the incomes of those with less education have stagnated or even declined. These