
Henri Lefebvre authored over seventy books in his lengthy lifetime. Rhythmanalysis contains the last of these, Éléments de rythmanalyse (published posthumously in 1992), together with two earlier essays and an introduction by Stuart Elden.1 Greatly influential in European intellectual life, Lefebvre here attempts to distill many of the insights and concerns of his previous studies into a “rhythmanalytical project.” Rhythmanalysis is a schematic attempt to found a new science, “a new field of knowledge [savoir]: the analysis of rhythms” (p. 3). Such lofty ambitions aside, from the point of view of American political science the English-language publication of Lefebvre’s final book is of little consequence. The vast majority of political scientists have likely never even come across Lefebvre’s name, let alone read any of his work. For some, there may have been some exposure to Lefebvre by way of his influence—both directly and through the contributions of Manuel Castels, David Harvey, and Ira Katznelson, among others—on urban studies and geography. For fewer still, if only because there are so few political scientists who are on the left, Lefebvre may have been discovered because of his role in the May 1968 events in France or as a theoretical touchstone in the New Left’s turn away from orthodox Marxism and economic reductionism. Even given these notable exceptions, however, it is undoubtedly the case that the reception of Lefebvre within American political science has been minimal.

Paradoxically, even within the disciplines where Lefebvre is a major presence, especially geography, things are apparently not a whole lot better. For Stuart Elden, the appropriation of Lefebvre’s work on space by English-speaking academics has resulted in an incomplete and inaccurate understanding of Lefebvre’s ideas: “It would therefore be harsh, but not perhaps unfair, to suggest that Lefebvre’s work has suffered as a result of being read in English and appropriated for a certain type of academic work by certain types of scholars.”2 Lefebvre’s most influential work, in this context, has been The Production of Space (1991). Geographers and urbanists have extensively appropriated this work in their analysis of how urbanism, the built environment, and spatial scale are central to the workings and continued expansion of capitalism. So far so good, it would seem, but through this reasonable and understandable appropriation what has often been left out is the question of time. In the attempt to come to terms with space as such, the question of temporality has often been forgotten—even though

---

1 Elden has also recently published a rigorous yet accessible intellectual biography of Lefebvre, Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible (London: Continuum, 2004).
The Production of Space places much emphasis on time in terms of the processes and history of space’s production and in terms of how individuals function through and within space as well as how they experience space. Lefebvre explicitly cautioned against an understanding of his work that turned it into a “science of space” or “spatio-analysis”:

In the first place, the basic idea could be obscured, for the knowledge sought here is not directed at space itself, nor does it construct models, typologies or prototypes of spaces; rather, it offers an exposition of the production of space. Lastly, a “spatio-analytic” approach could confuse and hence compromise the idea of an analysis of rhythms—an idea that may be expected to put the finishing touches to the exposition of the production of space.

For Lefebvre, the question of space was but one of the components for the understanding and critique of society as lived and concrete. As he had already indicated in the conclusion to The Production of Space, the analysis of rhythms would bring the study of the production of space to its analytical endpoint. Elden notes that the idea of rhythmanalysis is very much a continuation of Lefebvre’s take on space and time, “the attempt to get us both to think space and time differently, and to think them together” (p. ix). Indeed, the idea of a rhythmanalysis makes explicit that time, space and power must be conceived and understood in their unity and modalities rather than in isolation and by way of piecemeal projects. Accordingly, Rhythmanalysis can be read as an extension of Lefebvre’s writings on space and as a corrective to the overly narrow appropriation of his work.

Rhythmanalysis can also be read as a further exposition on everyday life; indeed, Lefebvre himself considered it a de facto fourth volume of his Critique of Everyday Life (p. viii). The category of everyday life is often taken to be everything that occurs within every society (or is sometimes confused with other categories, such as “lifeworld”). In part, this confusion stems from Lefebvre’s own uses where at times he seems to equate everyday life to everything: “everything stems from everyday life which in turn reveals everything, or, in other words, that the critical analysis of everyday life reveals ‘everything’ because it takes ‘everything’ into account.” Similarly, Lefebvre’s emphasis on the political and strategic centrality of the everyday, as made evident when his students at Nanterre organized against gender-segregated dormitories in March of 1968, sparking a series of upheavals that resulted in the May events, also has led to the perception of everyday life as “everything” that is concrete and lived. These methodological and strategic uses aside, however, it is made clear, beginning with Lefebvre’s analysis of Joyce’s Ulysses in the first volume of the Critique of Everyday Life and continuing to Rhythmanalysis, that what distinguishes the everyday is a certain rhythm. Everyday life is historically distinct in that it emerges with the conception of linear time and the organization of life into repetitive twenty-four hour units:

---

4 The first two volumes of Lefebvre’s Critique of Everyday Life have been published in English by Verso Books (1992 and 2002); a translation of the third volume is forthcoming from Verso.
Everyday life is modeled on abstract, quantitative time, the time of watches and clocks. This time was introduced bit by bit in the West after the invention of watches, in the course of their entry into social practice... However, everyday life remains shot through and traversed by great cosmic and vital rhythms: day and night, the months and the seasons, and still more precisely biological rhythms... The study of everyday life has already demonstrated this banal yet little-known difference between the cyclical and the linear, between rhythmmed times and the times of brutal repetitions. (p. 73)

There are central and important methodological and political–strategic implications in taking the everyday as an object of analysis but what distinguishes everyday life as a category of phenomena is its rhythm(s) and the articulations and contradictions between the cyclical and linear that characterize it. That is, when functioning as the object of inquiry, the category of everyday life is “everything” in the sense that all that occurs in society is within the scope of that which can and should be studied. As a descriptive category, however, it is referring to a historically particular rhythm of social life that emerges with capitalism/modernity.

Significantly, a key chapter where Lefebvre examines the repetitive rhythms of everyday life is titled “Dressage,” the term usually used in reference to horse training. Just as horses, dogs, and other animals have particular rhythms that characterize their training and submission, so it is with humans as well: “One breaks-in another human living being by making them repeat a certain act, a certain gesture or movement... Repetition, perhaps mechanical in (simply behavioural) animals, is ritualized in humans” (p. 39). Indeed, for Lefebvre, such repetitions and ritualizations go so far as to format the rhythms and desires of the body:

Mealtimes result from convention since they differ according to country. But, if you eat at midday and at eight o’clock in the evening, you will end up being hungry at these times. Perhaps decades are needed to bend the body to these rhythms and it is not uncommon for children to refuse social rhythms. (p. 75)

Within the rhythms of everyday life, the linear beats of repetitions accompanied by the cyclical refrains of rewards and respites, we find the totality of domination and the concrete unity between the “macro” and “micro” levels of capitalist societies. Lefebvre clearly intends rhythmanalysis to be an approach that extends to all social phenomena, from dinner rituals and street life to commodity production and war-making, and is able to expose their internality and interrelatedness.

In addition to the topics already mentioned, Rhythmanalysis includes expositions on music, Mediterranean cities, methodology, and the normal and pathological (the eurhythmic and arrhythmic). For those who are working on questions of everyday life, urbanism, the production of space, or contemporary Marxist theory the relevance of Rhythmanalysis is apparent. Fundamentally, however, the utility of Rhythmanalysis for American political science lies elsewhere. When Elden critiqued Anglo-American social science for doing disservice to Lefebvre, he argued that the source of this failure was not taking Lefebvre’s work as a whole. Elden critiqued the cutting and pasting of Lefebvre’s ideas in the current fashion of eclecticism and thus ignoring Lefebvre’s broader
philosophical and political contributions. This claim seems a bit contradictory when, at the same time, Lefebvre is celebrated for his own eclecticism, for appropriating, among others, Heidegger, Hegel, and Nietzsche for his particular version of the Marxist problematic. The problem with contemporary appropriations of Lefebvre is not so much that they are partial but, rather, that they are too disciplinary. Geographers are concerned with space, urbanists with the city, political scientists with politics. As such, it is no surprise when geographers do not share Lefebvre’s grand objects of analysis or even his epistemological position of going from the abstract to the concrete. The study of everyday life and rhythms are fundamentally anti-disciplinary tasks cutting against the practice of the “specialist.” Analytical projects such as Lefebvre’s, which seek to understand the general in order to understand the specific, imply that if we limit ourselves to studying only a small part of social reality we will inevitably fail to understand even that small fragment. Thus, appropriating the bureaucratic divisions of the university as substantive/analytical categories for social inquiry becomes the pitfall of contemporary social science. In journals such as the American Political Science Review, specialists attempt to shed light on social phenomena and most often do not get very far. We are constantly up against the Taylorization of the academy and its resultant deformation of social scientific inquiry. It is in this context that Rhythmanalysis is of the greatest utility. After thumbing through the APSR and articles with titles such as “Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?,” reading Rhythmanalysis is a reminder of how social scientific inquiry can and should be. Rhythmanalysis is a work to stimulate our analytical imaginations and help us think beyond the confines of our own institutional positions and academic training.

PETER BRATSIS
University of Salford (UK)


Neither Friends—Nor Enemies: Latinos, Blacks, and Afro-Latinos is an important and timely anthology written from a comparative hemispheric standpoint that examines the significance of race or “racialization” in the two Americas. It is a collection of sixteen short essays written by scholars and activists who discuss the multiple ways in which people of Latin American descent in the US and Latin America are challenging the traditional binary racial paradigm. Who are Afro-Latin Americans? Do Blacks in the Americas have a greater common experience resulting from slavery? Given the ever-changing nature of racial and ethnic identification, what are the goals, prospects and obstacles for coalition-building between and among racialized minorities in US society today? Along with presenting a synthesis of the current debates on the social construction of race and blackness in the Americas, the essays in this anthology examine how Afro-Latin social movements and other non-white actors are reshaping the social geography of race and ethnicity.

African-descended populations are found in most Latin American countries, as far north as Mexico and as far south as Chile. In Mexico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica,
Panama, Belize, and Honduras, Blacks are a tiny but significant minority. African communities in Central America and Mexico arrived roughly in the sixteenth century. Thousands were shipped as slaves while a tiny portion participated in the conquest. Currently, many of these Black communities are struggling to preserve their cultural identity as they fight for social inclusion and civil and human rights protection. For the most part, the Black presence and contribution to culture and national identity in this region is not commonly known.

Throughout the Americas—from Los Angeles to Rio de Janeiro, from the Bronx to Salvador Bahia—Brown and Black peoples are challenging racial inequality, while at the same time constructing alternative models for political participation. The struggle to be full citizens, on the one hand, and the day-to-day human rights violations faced by African-Americans, Afro-Latinas/os, and Latinas/os, on the other, serve to reinforce the shared experiences of Brown and Black peoples in the Americas. Contributors to this volume agree that deeply entrenched racial and social prejudices and discrimination are the foundations for the de facto disenfranchisement of Black and Brown populations of the Western hemisphere. Moreover, the racial ideologies in the Americas, and the impact of globalization on national economies in the forms of glaring poverty and widespread human rights violations, highlight the urgent need for constructing a common paradigm of social action in the Americas.

The anthology focuses on the construction of race and the significance of racial categories as transnational concepts; the meaning of blackness in the Americas and how it influences diasporic consciousness; the role of progressive social movements; and the implications and consequences of Black, Latina/o political alliances in the United States. Some of the themes include Afro-Ecuadorians’ struggle for social justice; how race is socially lived in Peru; transnational blackness and consciousness in Honduras; Afro-Mexicans and social invisibility; race and citizenship in Brazil; socio-racial hierarchies, identity, and power among Haitians in South Florida; racial profiling of African-Americans and Latinas/os; racial politics and coalition-building among minority political elites; and a provocative essay on the social responsibility of the Latina/o scholars in the US.

Writing on Black Ecuador Carlos de la Torre’s essay is important given the scant attention paid to Afro-Latin social movements in general, and Afro-Ecuadorian social movements in particular. His essay reviews Afro-Ecuadorians’ responses to racism, the impact of their efforts on civil society, and the broader struggle for participatory democracy within larger social movements of Indigenous Peoples like the National Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities. Some argue that starting in the 1990s Afro-Ecuadorian social movements gained steam as Afro-Ecuadorians from all over the country began to challenge and call into question racist and patriarchal practices of the Ecuadorian state as well as civil society. At the same time external actors like the World Bank and internal actors like the Ecuadorian state began to fund development projects in Black regions and support Black organizations. Issues such as police brutality, the sexist and racist images of Black women in the popular media, and land rights were brought to the forefront by Afro-Ecuadorians as they demanded full and equal citizenship as well as human rights protection.

Afro-Ecuadorian social movements—protest groups, NGOs, and popular Black resistance—are still in their infancy and in order to be successful will have to form important tactical and strategic alliances with indigenous groups. It will be
crucial for Afro-Ecuadorian social movements to have a clear and well defined agenda that clearly articulates the realities of four important groups: campesinos (peasants), urban proletarians recently arrived in Ecuador’s two major cities, the slowly burgeoning middle class, and Afro-Ecuadorian women. These diverse elements broadly constitute the core constituents of Afro-Ecuadorians and now form the backbone of progressive organizing.

Bobby Vaughn’s essay on Black Mexico examines the historical presence of Afro-Mexicans on the Costa Chica region of Southern Mexico as well as their current struggle for social justice by mainly focusing on emerging local political movements and how national ideologies shaped political blackness in Mexico. Historically, Afro-Mexicans played an essential part in the socio-economic life of colonial Mexico. Africans fulfilled multiple roles for their owners, and they represented not only labor value, but also status to their owners. Moreover, Afro-Mexicans contributed essential labor to the colonial Mexican economy just as it boomed.

According to Vaughn, before the 1990s in Mexico there had never been a self-identified Black political leader on the national or statewide level, and grassroots activity by Afro-Mexicans was almost nonexistent. In order to illustrate Mexico’s complicated racial landscape, Vaughn provides a snapshot of René Juárez Cisneros, a Black political leader who was elected the governor of the state of Guerrero. During his campaign no mention was made of his ethnicity, nor did he make reference to it during his inaugural address. Against this backdrop, Vaughn argues that the path to political power was made by not consciously associating with blackness, Black social movements, or Black concerns. Blackness is perceived as a political liability and within the broad tapestry of hegemonic racial discourse it is largely seen as an obstacle to social progress. Afro-Mexicans are not part of the discourse on indigenismo, ethnicity, and culture, which are powerful forces and, as a consequence, they have not been able to benefit from its power. Moreover, as Afro-Mexicans, they are socially marginal because they are Black. Afro-Mexican social movements are at an important crossroad as they attempt to reclaim their sense of identity while at the same time organize and promote a political agenda that articulates their concerns.

In what ways does racism obstruct the process of democratization of rights and citizenship in Peru and Latin America? Susan Obler’s essay on Peru analyzes the relationship between race and power in Peru. She argues that racism is neither a natural category nor a legally sanctioned practice. The contradiction, according to Obler, is in the widely held belief that there is racism but no racial discrimination. This contradiction is rooted in a definition of racial discrimination that is based on criteria imported from abroad—mainly the United States. Obler asserts that in Peru the ways in which various groups experience racial discrimination changes and varies over time depending on their position within the overall social structure. Moreover, race is largely seen in personal rather than institutional terms, leading most local observers to conclude that the best way to deal with racism is intermarriage (miscegenation), a subtle form of ethnic cleansing. According to this logic, which is widespread throughout Latin America, Blacks should intermarry with whites and, by doing so, they will eventually disappear. In other words, if there are no Blacks the problem of racism is resolved.

Mark Sawyer’s essay examines several key problems of Black and Latina/o politics in the US by focusing on the left’s retreat from the concept of race; how racism within the Latina/o community towards darker persons prevents political
alliances or makes them more difficult; and how the inability of African Americans to recognize the historical experience of other racial groups contributes to the overall problem of coalition-building. He argues that the narrowly constructed definitions of social, cultural, and political identity undermine possible alliances among groups who may share similar political interests. Surveying US politics, from California (both state and local), to San Antonio, Chicago, Atlanta, and elsewhere, Sawyer argues that there is a growing pattern of literature that points to conflict and difference between Blacks and Latinas/os. Sawyer posits instead that there have been patterns of cooperation, conflict, and ambivalence; and contrary to the literature that emphasizes conflict, the overall empirical picture is mixed or much more complex. For example, he singles out the Harold Washington broad-based coalition in Chicago (1983 and 1987) where Mayor Washington received broad support from Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; and the case of Sam Zamarippa who in 2003 was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives from an historically black district in Atlanta. Sawyer argues that through careful analysis, progressive political coalition-building, and mutual understanding Blacks and Latinas/os should be able to arrive at common political denominators and in doing so minimize conflict.

The key strength of this anthology is its interdisciplinary range. It coherently and intelligently weaves together some of the leading debates taking place in political science, anthropology, Latin American Studies, Latina/o Studies, Africana Studies, and sociology. By doing so, the anthology skillfully promotes an interdisciplinary dialogue that rarely takes place within the academy by allowing scholars from one discipline to follow some of the key debates in another discipline. From this angle, it adds to many of the current debates taking place in these disciplines by placing issues of race, race and gender relations, identity politics, and social movements in a transnational framework as well as within a national context. This anthology reflects where the literature is headed as more interdisciplinary and comparative studies on race, race and gender relations, diasporic consciousness, and social movements situated within a transnational framework are desperately needed.

KWAME DIXON
DePauw University


On November 12, 2005, David Brooks, conservative columnist for the New York Times, wrote a bizarre opinion piece in which he blamed American gangsta rap and hip-hop culture for the riots that were taking place in France. Brooks had detected a similarity in “hand gestures” and “poses of exaggerated manhood” between the young Muslim men burning neighborhoods in France and the hip-hop generation in America. For Brooks, rap music represents a “globalized … culture of resistance” that is so “powerful” and “hegemonic” that it drives disaffected and oppressed French youth to “fantasize about cop killings and gang rape” just like their American counterparts.
Brooks strains to conceal the contempt and fear he feels for hip-hop culture behind a façade of understanding and paternalistic compassionate conservatism. But his diagnosis of the problem is clear. “You take a population of young men who are oppressed by racism and who face limited opportunities, and you present them with a culture that encourages them to become exactly the sort of people the bigots think they are—and you call this proud self-assertion and empowerment.” Brooks is speaking directly to his ideological opponents: rap is a symptom of liberal disease both in France and the US rather than a source of cultural strength; the riots are a lesson for, and indictment of, those liberals who would coddle the evildoers, rioters, drug dealers, gangsta rappers, and terrorists; and they both deserve what they get, be it the destruction of cities across France or terrorist attacks on New York.

Despite its conclusions, Brooks’ essay does provide an entry point into the debate over the relevance of hip-hop to some of the great cultural and political questions of the day. Does hip-hop, as a source of black cultural strength, have potential as a transformative political force? Or, is rap the perfect example of postmodern cultural exploitation that further hardens oppressive racial stereotypes and social categories? Also, Brooks does manage to raise a point that many liberal and progressive scholars and political activists may also agree with. How can music and culture that so often glorifies violence, misogyny, and bigotry offer any vision or strength for progressive politics?

The special issue of Socialism and Democracy entitled Hip Hop, Race, and Cultural Politics offers a sharp rebuke to the indictment of hip-hop culture offered by Brooks. The articles included in the issue capture a wide portrait of the scholarly and political debates surrounding rap as a cultural phenomenon and its potential as a transformative political tool, including an examination of the relationship between rap and Islam, two articles that debate the implications of Eminem’s commercial success and cultural influence among white youth, and a series of dialogues about the various efforts at hip-hop grassroots political organizing.

The core of the special issue is a dialogue between hip-hop studies scholars that embrace the style and content of rap and those who embrace the energy and relevance of hip-hop culture but are also willing to question some of its content and potential as a political force. A leading example of the former is Todd Boyd, noted hip-hop studies scholar, who appears in the special issue by way of a conversation with the editor, Yusuf Nuruddin. Boyd is well known for his provocative embrace of the term “nigga” and his advocacy of a break with the civil rights generation and its failed political leaders that “want to maintain a lock on what happens in the community” (p. 51). Boyd charges that the Civil Rights movement has become passé, and its politics are outdated relics, entirely irrelevant to the hip-hop generation. In opposition to civil rights figures, Boyd offers the nigga, “an individual who fits in hip hop and who is not interested in necessarily appeasing the masses or fitting into anybody’s categories, but instead is interested in doing things their own way in spite of the consequences” (p. 52). Political activists and community leaders must understand the nigga and hip-hop culture in order to provide a way forward from the stagnant politics of civil rights. As for what a hip-hop politics may look like, Boyd offers pronouncements about land, community, and hip-hop as an “alternative institution” that are perhaps necessarily vague given the conversational format. Still, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Boyd has an unfortunate tendency to conflate culture and politics.
He embraces rap as a way of situating himself in opposition to an elder generation of scholars and theorists, and there is no denying hip-hop as a cultural force. But, as Nuruddin points out, the messy work of building political coalitions and institutions is not aided by protestations of a generational divide.

Another scholar who concentrates on the generational divide over the importance of hip-hop is Bakari Kitwana. Kitwana takes up the contentious debate going on within the academy between intellectuals who condemn rap and those like Boyd who are fervent defenders of it. Kitwana derides as unenlightened and uninformed those scholars who criticize hip-hop studies. Kitwana points out that “the civil rights establishment has long been ineffective in addressing issues critical to the younger generation, from police brutality to living wage jobs” (p. 74). On the other hand, “hip-hop music reflects in large part a generation heavily influenced by public policy that [resulted in]... bleak job prospects... rising incarceration rates and deteriorating education” (p. 76). Hip-hop is a vibrant cultural movement that expresses a specific political and socio-economic context, and hip-hop studies has produced significant scholarship. Kitwana describes critics of hip-hop studies as a “ragtag brigade” and counsels: “Build ya skills. Then bring it on” (p. 77). The style of the short article, obviously inspired by a rap aesthetic, is hot and adversarial. And as such it is a compelling example of how hip-hop studies can be more provocative and thus more engaging to a younger audience than is often the case with academic argumentation. At the same time, as a scholar, I would have liked a more serious and in-depth treatment of hip-hop’s content and the arguments of its critics. Kitwana and Boyd both present shallow critiques that skirt some of the problems inherent in rap culture; they offer apologetics rather than the type of critical engagement that is necessary to realize the political power of hip-hop culture.

Yusuf Nuruddin and Regina Naasirah Blackburn embrace the style and spirit of rap while at the same time critically engaging its content and potential. Blackburn utilizes the device of the rap battle to pose a series of binaries that illuminate both the possibilities and problems of rap. In conclusion, she refers to Cornel West and calls for a positive reconstruction of hip-hop culture: “Let there be a Hip Hop Renaissance that surpasses the Harlem Renaissance” (p. 101).

In a long and fascinating essay that combines memoir and rigorous analysis, Nuruddin offers a critique of Boyd’s concept of the generational divide. For real political progress to be achieved, “the rhetoric of intergenerational hostility will have to cease ... [It] is primarily a black male misdirected testosterone problem” (p. 232). Nuruddin offers a positive vision based on a community-wide commitment to grassroots political activism and institution building. Specifically, Nuruddin calls for “reparations in the form of a ‘Marshall Plan’ for the inner cities ... financed and maintained via federal, state and municipal monies... [and] Internal Reparations [i.e.] organized self-help” (p. 294) all of which would be utilized to build community-based institutions of higher education that Nuruddin calls “communiversities.”

Nuruddin is not focused solely on academic debate, but also on the development of a political and cultural movement that fuses the passion and truth of hip-hop and the grassroots political activism of which he is a veteran in order to address the oppression of the African American community. Accordingly, the special issue devotes a section, containing several essays and conversational dialogues, to studying the fusion of hip-hop cultural politics and activism. There
is a strong desire among some elements of the community to harness the cultural power of hip-hop in the service of progressive political organization. Of particular interest to many observers are the actions of rap music CEO or “hip-hop mogul” Russell Simmons. Simmons was very visible during the recent presidential election cycle, organizing a “Hip Hop Summit” and directing other activities aimed at mobilizing young hip-hop generation voters. Generally, the authors in the special issue are quite ambivalent towards Simmons’ political activity, viewing it as little more than an attempt to extend the brand of Simmons’ hip-hop cultural empire. Mark Anthony Neal is especially critical of Simmons and other “hip-hop moguls,” describing them as “postmodern examples of the chattel slavery-era ‘overseers’ who derived power and influence as the autonomous gatekeepers of plantations publics” (p. 162). Rap is often an amazing tool for individual and corporate accumulation of capital. And yet, as Neal highlights, the recording industry is inherently about the exploitation of culture in the service of capitalist profits. Despite the intentions and rhetoric of mogul such as Simmons, it is difficult and possibly dangerous to build a political movement on the basis of such cultural exploitation.

It is gratifying to see scholars who are approving of hip-hop culture nonetheless offering critiques that are important parts of the process of developing viable hip-hop politics. Nuruddin believes that this is an important time for those working towards progressive change for the African-American community. He concludes: We are now playing a dangerous game of Cop and Blow with the future of race, with the destiny of black people. Years from now we may be toasting about how we almost had liberation. But we let it slip through our fingers. Years from now the toasts may lament how we once had “knowledge of self,” black pride, political consciousness, community control, alternative institutions, self-determination but lost it all in a bid to get rich quick. (p. 282)

The articles in this special issue put the lie to Brooks’ limited analysis of the culture and politics of hip-hop. All of the authors illustrate the importance of hip-hop as a source of cultural strength and political possibility. At the same time many of the essays present a useful critique of hip-hop politics. Scholars who are interested in addressing urban problems and issues of political alienation would do well to devote some time to understanding hip-hop culture.

JASON A. MCDANIEL
University of Southern California


Capitalist globalization has stimulated the rise of social movements challenging the hegemony of the market and offering a vision of a democratic globalization committed to justice and social equality. The same technologies which have allowed capital to decentralize production across the globe have allowed labor, environmental, women’s, peace, and human rights movements the opportunity to share experiences and strategies of resistance on a global level. Likewise, the
increasingly transnational character of capital has forced social movements to progress beyond the confines of national boundaries to embrace goals, strategies, and organizational forms that are increasingly transnational in character. This edited volume offers an important collection of articles addressing the challenges social movements face when they seek to create transnational coalitions against neoliberalism as well as an evaluation of the conditions for successful transnational organizing.

Bandy and Smith define transnational movement networks as “a collaboration of movement organizations in at least two countries that exchange information and experiences, provide mutual support, have at least a partially organized social base, and engage in joint strategic campaigns” (231). These networks are seen as precursors for a transnational civil society that would emphasize values and practices of social justice, human rights, and ecological sustainability rather than those oriented to the market. At the same time, however, Bandy and Smith do not accept the promises of “civil society” without question. A major contribution of the articles in this book is the recognition that “transnational civil societies are often not so civil” (p. 231). The problematic nature of civil society arises from the inequalities of power, resources, and organizational capacity that characterize global capitalism. Successful transnational movements must, Bandy and Smith argue, acknowledge these inequalities, subject them to open debate and discussion, and redistribute power and resources within a democratic organizational culture.

Laura Macdonald’s examination of the role of women’s movements in anti-free trade campaigns, Daniel Faber’s study of the transnational environmental justice movement, and Ethel Brooks’ analysis of campaigns against child labor directed at the garment industry in Bangladesh offer powerful examples of the challenges faced by transnational movements in creating a transnational civil society. Macdonald argues that masculinist assumptions about knowledge, especially in highly technical fields such as economics and trade, have served as an obstacle to women’s participation in anti-free trade campaigns in North America through their devaluing of women’s unpaid labor and their failure to address women’s unequal access to economic resources. Faber points to the difficulties in creating transnational coalitions in the context of competing discourses on environmental justice politics. The identity politics orientation of US environmental justice movements, which emphasizes the cultural oppression of minority communities, conflicts with the orientation of environmental justice movements in the global South, which see majorities as subject to forces of capitalist exploitation. Brooks is critical of anti-child labor campaigns based in the United States that, for all their good intentions, reduce Bangladeshi workers to passive victims and fail to acknowledge how class, gender, nationality, and age shape the reality of child labor in the Bangladeshi garment industry. The failure to include Bangladeshi workers as major participants in anti-child labor campaigns renders it, in the eyes of local activists, as simply another expression of imperialist paternalism.

The articles in this collection also address ways in which transnational movements have developed strategies and organizational forms to ensure solidarity and equality within coalitions. Pauline Cullen’s chapter on the Platform of European Social NGOs, a coalition of thirty-nine local, national, and international organizations promoting anti-neoliberal forms of social
integration in Europe, points to the importance of organizational leadership committed to negotiating internal differences and campaigns directed at “transversal issues” that unite coalition members. Lesley Wood, in her chapter on People’s Global Action (PGA), likewise argues for the importance of a prefigurative organizational culture for transnational movements. Decentralization within PGA has succeeded in preventing coalition members from the North from overwhelming those from the South, and the constant revision of “living documents” outlining PGA’s goals and strategies has contributed to the construction of a collective identity that is respectful of difference. Peter Waterman makes the same point in his chapter on relations between international labor movements and international NGOs and social movements. The construction of unity-in-diversity, he argues, requires addressing tensions between local and global, North and South, and labor and social movements; this, in return, requires an organizational commitment to democratization, dialogue, and mutual aid.

The book makes another important contribution in the way that articles examine the important role that national political structures play in transnational movements. Rather than positing the decline of the nation-state or its displacement by transnational institutions, these articles suggest, in Bandy and Smith’s words, that “an effective struggle against the ideological and structural hegemony of global neoliberalism will likely depend upon efforts to strengthen institutions for democratic accountability and participation at the national level as well as transnationally” (p. 12). Gay Seidman’s study of the Sullivan Principles, which were corporate codes of conduct meant to divert campaigns for divestment from apartheid South Africa, makes clear the limits of replacing nation-state regulation of economic activity with more privatized forms of corporate self-regulation. Corporate codes of conduct necessarily reflect the interests of their creators as opposed to those of workers, communities, or the environment, and as such regulation by democratic states continues to be central to efforts to constrain corporate power globally. Arunas Juska and Bob Edwards make a similar argument concerning the national foundations of transnational movements in their discussion of the campaign to block Smithfield Foods’ entry into the Polish pork industry. Strong national farming movements in Poland had been organizing against neoliberalism, and the Polish election cycle made government officials especially sensitive to citizen concerns (as well as those of the European Union, with which the Polish government was in negotiations concerning membership) over industrial farming. These conditions facilitated the creation of a coalition between Polish farmers and US animal welfare activists.

Finally, the articles in this book examine how success should be defined for transnational movements. John Foster’s study of campaigns against NAFTA and the FTAA, for example, suggests that while the movement against NAFTA failed to defeat or significantly reconfigure the agreement, it cannot be considered a failure. The anti-NAFTA campaign made the economic and political consequences of free trade a subject for public debate, and in so doing changed the field of struggle. Trade agreements are no longer technical documents of concern only to government officials, corporate executives, and economists. Instead, they have been transformed into sites of political contestation, both in the negotiating rooms and in the streets. The current campaign against FTAA illustrates how much has changed since, and because of, the campaign against NAFTA. This is, for Foster,
evidence of the great success that transnational movements can have in challenging neoliberalism.

The editors have done a commendable job in their selection of articles as well as their introductory and concluding chapters. Each article individually is strong, and together the variety of cases and issues addressed provide for a thorough examination of the obstacles facing, and opportunities for, successful transnational movements against neoliberalism. No punches are pulled in assessing the difficulties such movements face, both in their organization and in their interactions with corporate and political power in global capitalism. At the same time, though, the book makes clear that there is considerable room for maneuver within global capitalism for effective transnational movements and campaigns against neoliberalism. This is a book that provides evidence that, despite neoliberal claims to the contrary, there is an alternative.

DANIEL EGAN
University of Massachusetts-Lowell


*Terror in the Mind of God* explores the uses of, and justifications for, religious violence and terrorism not only within Islam but also within Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism. The most interesting aspect of the book is its interviews with perpetrators and supporters of religious terrorism. Juergensmeyer takes care to portray the perspectives of his subjects in an empathetic way, so that readers can understand where they are coming from. This is important because, as Juergensmeyer points out, these men—and I do mean men—are not crazies, perpetrating rogue acts of violence. Instead, he rightly notes, “it takes a community of support and, in many cases, a large organizational network for an act of terrorism to succeed” (p. 11). That is why he avoids using the term “terrorist” in his study—because it puts the focus on the person rather than the social context and because the term puts a negative judgment on acts that can be seen as legitimate—“as preemptive strikes, as defensive tactics in an ongoing battle, or as symbols indicating to the world that it is indeed in a state of grave and ultimate conflict” (p. 9). Taking a “cultures of violence” approach, Juergensmeyer stresses “the perception [of perpetrators and supporters] that their communities are already under attack—are being violated—and that their acts are therefore simply responses to the violence they have experienced” (12). Thus, they see their acts as legitimate and religiously justifiable.

Juergensmeyer argues that acts of religious terrorism must be seen “as forms of public performance rather than aspects of political strategy. [They] are symbolic statements aimed at providing a sense of empowerment to desperate communities,” rather than strategic acts designed to elicit actual change (p. xi). In fact, Juergensmeyer rejects the common social science definition of terrorism as “the use of covert violence by a group for political ends” (p. 124). Acts of religious terrorism, he insists, “are not tactics directed toward an immediate, earthly, or strategic goal but dramatic events intended to impress for their symbolic
significance. As such, they can be analyzed as one would any other symbol, ritual, or sacred drama” (pp. 125–126). Moreover, he argues that “the script of cosmic war is central to virtually all of the incidents of performance violence described in the first part of [the] book” (p. 150).

_Terror in the Mind of God_ makes the very important point that violence is “not the monopoly of any single religion” (p. xii). In fact, I chose this book for one of my classes precisely because of that point. I wanted to deal with the issue of religious terrorism, but not play into the common misconception that only Islam yields violence. The book was accessible to students and raised multiple interesting questions for discussion.

Its strength, however, also turns out to be its weakness: Juergensmeyer ends up lumping together cases that do not actually fit together. His analysis makes the most sense when applied to incidents like the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the terrorism of al Qaeda but is less convincing in other cases. This is interesting because the book was originally published in 2000. The original volume was well received, apparently making the best nonfiction book list at both the _Los Angeles Times_ and the _Washington Post_. The “completely revised” 2003 edition fully integrates the attacks of September 11 into the text, and the book seems as if it were written to explain that attack, even though it was not.

But while the attacks of September 11 and other al Qaeda hits nicely illustrate the spectacular, theatrical approach he describes, as does the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, perpetrated by Tim McVeigh, and of the World Trade Center in 1993, perpetrated by followers of Egyptian Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, other acts discussed by Juergensmeyer seem more strategic than theatrical. For example, Palestinian suicide bombers, while arguably theatrical, strive not to make a statement about cosmic war, but rather to force Israel to give up land or to prevent deals they do not think beneficial to the Palestinian people, and that strategy has had some success. Likewise, the not-very-theatrical Christian Right attacks on abortion clinics and doctors have aimed to scare people away from performing abortions and to publicize the political battle against the right to choose, and that strategy has succeeded in driving some doctors out of the abortion business and advancing the movement in general.

Second, Juergensmeyer’s book does not adequately differentiate between religious and political violence. For example, Jewish extremists sometimes perpetrate violence in order to hasten the unfolding of their religious eschatology. They see Palestinian resisters as opposed to God’s will. So while Jewish extremists have a political goal, their primary motivation is religious. The Palestinian case, in contrast, is more political than religious. The original Palestinian terrorists headed by Arafat acted to advance a nationalist struggle. And while Hamas has religious goals for Palestinian society, that religious discourse is grafted onto the same political struggle to throw off Israeli occupation and achieve an autonomous state. The same is the case with the Irish Republican Army. Its primary goal is political liberation, even if religious arguments are sometimes made along the way.

Third, just as some of Juergensmeyer’s examples are not primarily religious, others are not really terrorism. For example, shootings and assassinations are not the same as terrorist attacks designed to kill and maim the maximum number of people. Plus they can have different motivations—to get rid of a political leader, to
scare an abortion doctor, or to express personal rage. Not all violent acts should be considered terrorism.

Fourth, while Juergensmeyer admirably desires to show the violent tendencies inherent in all religions, the examples he uses from the Christian religion do not fit his argument. I do not think that Tim McVeigh exemplifies Christian terrorism, because Christian Identity—to the extent that that discourse even motivated him—is not really Christianity. In its American incarnation, Christian Identity is a white supremacist, anti-Semitic, anti-internationalist, anti-democratic conspiracy theory that has only the slightest whiff of Christian rhetoric. For example, claims that “Jesus had been an Aryan, not a Semite; that the migrating Israelite tribes from the northern kingdom of Israel were in fact blue-eyed Aryans who somehow ended up in the British Isles; and that the ‘Lost Sheep of the House of Israel’ were none other than present-day Englishmen” (p. 33) are simply not rooted in Christian Scripture; nor is the claim that non-white people are inferior mudpeople. So while Tim McVeigh and his Christian Identity compatriots do expect a cosmic race war to break out, that is not a Christian view. At least Jewish and Muslim extremists find justifications for their reprehensible politics in the Bible (messianic dreams) and the Koran (jihad) respectively. And while most Jews and Muslims reject such extremism, at least those folks are not just making stuff up, like the racist followers of Christian Identity.

In the conclusion of the book, Juergensmeyer analyzes his cases of religious violence in a number of ways, some enlightening, some not. His discussion of why America often plays the role of enemy in recent religious discourses is educative, if not original. The same can be said of his discussion of how religious violence empowers marginal men and provides a response to humiliation, and how perpetrators generally oppose gender equality and lesbian/gay rights. What did not add clarity was his argument that bloody sacrifices play a central role in religion in general, functioning as a safety valve that releases feelings of aggression that might otherwise destroy peaceful society. This latter argument is the one most relevant to the multiple religions approach he uses, but it does not explain as much as he thinks because many of his cases are not examples of religiously driven violence.

While the book presents much food for thought, in the end it seems to me that terrorism and right-wing religious movements are best explained by factors such as religious opposition to the Western tradition of secularism and liberal democracy, political opposition to US foreign policy and the desire of peoples for self-determination, and righteous critiques of the injustices of the market economy, as well as anti-Semitism (which appears even in the Japanese case) and other irrational hatreds—factors to which the author does not pay enough attention and which are actually obscured by the multiple religions approach presented in the book.

R. CLAIRE SNYDER
George Mason University