

secting with and transcending the substantive topics on which specific chapters focus. These include politics relating to race, as Pitney Jr raises questions concerning different rates of diagnosis across racial groups, and the class politics that pervade discussion concerning access to treatments and educational interventions. Here, the context of the United States health system raises specific issues and challenges (such as the navigation of medical insurance systems), the details of which are possibly unfamiliar to readers outside the United States, but are likely to be of interest to autism and wider disability scholars, particularly for those who work within and around the UK National Health Service.

Indeed, health-related discourses of autism, along with detailed consideration of 'cure' and of specific interventions such as applied behaviour analysis can be said to dominate in this book, with nearly a quarter of its substantive content existing within the chapter entitled 'Medicine, Science and Math'. It is possible that such a focus on health reflects the wider culture of American autism policy and politics which this book seeks to represent, and to which it speaks, as another review of the book endorsed on the author's blog describes autism as 'an ailment whose precise definition is debated in the medical world'; and characterizes autistic people as 'patients'. This characterization, and the related terminology used within the book itself may represent a challenge, not least for those members of the autistic community (mentioned briefly by Pitney Jr) who conceive of their autism as a facet of identity rather than a health issue or 'ailment' in need of cure.

In this sense, however, *The Politics of Autism* does achieve something important in setting out and summarizing some current authoritative political discourses surrounding autism, and providing a springboard for future discussion and debate so that, as Pitney Jr himself concludes, 'After decades of talking about autism as a deficit of communication, people who make and study policy should listen to autistic people speak for themselves' (p. 122).

References

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It's a small world: international deaf spaces and encounters, edited by Michele Friedner and Annelies Kusters, Washington, DC, Gallaudet University Press, 2015, 306 pp., \$70.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-56-368652-8

It's a Small World: International Deaf Spaces and Encounters, edited by Michele Friedner and Annelies Kusters, is an interdisciplinary exploration of how deaf people from around the world encounter and form spaces with one another in international settings. Its five sections

– respectively titled ‘Gatherings’, ‘Language’, ‘Projects’, ‘Networks’, and ‘Visions’ – each focus on a different aspect of deaf people meeting across various kinds of boundaries. In this way, the book not only offers insights into the lives of different deaf people but also bears implications for core issues in disability studies.

Friedner and Kusters’ Introduction highlights key issues for the book and for deaf studies as a discipline. As the editors note, what is termed a DEAF-SAME discourse (reflecting the convention of representing English glosses of sign language words with capital letters) is prevalent in many deaf communities. This focus on the shared experiences and commonalities of deaf people across national and other kinds of boundaries is in part a form of resistance to (western) dominant discourses which treat deafness as an individual problem to be normalized via medical interventions and oralist education of deaf children in mainstream settings. However, a focus on sameness and unity can also mask underlying fissures and inequities in deaf communities, which this book also seeks to chronicle in the context of globalization.

The section ‘Gatherings’ opens with Gulliver’s chapter about historic international deaf community banquets and other meetings in Paris, the site of the famed *Institute Nationale des Sourds-Muets*, founded in 1791. This chapter also describes the French deaf community’s gradual loss of control over its school and education system. Schmitt’s chapter describes international sign language arts festivals, which largely ‘belong to a transnational elite’ (19) of educated and comparatively advantaged deaf people. Merricks’ chapter about the 2011 World Federation of the Deaf Youth Camp in South Africa likewise hints at barriers and inequities arising for some participants in international deaf spaces, while Zurov’s chapter outlines the disturbing history and prevalence of anti-Semitism in deaf communities. As Zurov writes, more spaces and organizations are needed that nurture deaf people’s multiple identities. Haualand, Solvang, and Brevik’s chapter about four deaf transnational gatherings highlights rituals and tensions in these spaces, including the reaction at the 2003 World Games for the Deaf to the United States’ men’s hockey team, whose players did not use sign language.

The section ‘Language’ includes several chapters about International Sign as ‘a construct specific to the communication between deaf people’ (60) who speak different sign languages. Crasborn and Hiddinga make the interesting argument that deaf people’s everyday experiences of navigating communication with hearing non-signers is part of what makes them adept at communicating with other deaf people from different sign language backgrounds. Green’s chapter makes the compelling argument that International Sign ‘involves a critical moral dimension’ as deaf signers seeking to communicate directly with each other invest their effort and will in doing so. Moges’ and Cooper’s chapters respectively raise issues relating to the impact of foreign sign languages on local sign languages in Eritrea and Vietnam. Cooper’s chapter stands out as a remarkable piece highlighting how Vietnamese tax incentives for businesses to hire disabled people have shaped the ‘disability marketplace’ where tours by deaf American Sign Language-speaking guides dominate, threatening the ecology of local sign languages and their speakers.

Part 3 of the book, ‘Projects’, includes Aina’s chapter about the continuing legacy of Andrew Foster, the deaf African-American missionary who from 1957 to 1987 founded 31 schools for deaf children and two teacher training programs in 13 West African countries, in addition to the numerous deaf churches which were his main focus. Rashid’s chapter describes a deaf leadership program in Nigeria led by American-Nigerian and British-Nigerian trainers, with mixed results. The chapters by Aina and Rashid hint at the problem of brain drain, when talented deaf Africans find the resources to leave their home countries for better lives abroad. De Meulder’s chapter compares the international trend of deaf

communities fighting for legal recognition of sign languages with the need for domestic legal initiatives that can achieve sign language rights in practice.

The 'Networks' section includes Emery's discussion of the deaf community as a diaspora, marked by a 'sense of loss that comes from being constantly disconnected from or even excluded from Deaf homelands' (195), as deaf schools and clubs are closed in the Global North. Moriarty Harrelson provides an arresting account of the 'Deaf global circuit' of tourism in the Global South, centering on Cambodia, which is imagined by deaf visitors 'as a place lacking in resources, material and social' (207). This chapter addresses the problems inherent in assuming 'a moral basis for intervention to help "develop" deaf communities where there is a perception that they do not exist' (208).

This thread highlighting divisions between the Global North and the Global South is taken up in the next section, 'Visions', where Kusters, Toura-Jensen, Verhelst, and Vestergaard offer a critique of the Danish-based Frontrunners international education program for deaf youth. This chapter centers on a five-week trip to Ghana by 13 mainly European deaf youth, where a participant is quoted as saying 'The Frontrunners got satisfaction and experience but the local people didn't get much' (258). Inequities are again highlighted in Ruiz-Williams, Burke, Chong, and Chainarong's chapter about their experiences as students in Gallaudet University's master's degree program in deaf studies. This chapter presents the experiences of gay, disabled, international, and Latino students, pointing the way toward a deaf studies of intersectionality. Ladd's concluding chapter seeks to theoretically engage with these experiences of diverse deaf people. While the concept of deafhood retains 'open-ended essentialism' based in signing deaf community histories and traditions, Ladd recognizes the 'double bind' of diverse deaf people feeling forced to background parts of their identities when asserting affiliation with deaf communities.

The writings in Friedner and Kusters' collection are of uniformly high quality, deeply relevant, and will be enjoyed by scholars, practitioners, and members of deaf and disability communities.

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