

that people who are blind do not have a “diminished understanding” of race: blind people have as significant an understanding of race as anyone else, and they experience race with “visual acuity” (pp. 3–4). However, a number of scholars go beyond arguing that blindness is not a deficiency to argue that it is its own way of knowing and creates new and different worlds. Without attending to the unique social worlds created by blind people’s modes of sensing and ways of knowing, we risk suggesting that blind experience is simply colonized by an imperialistic sighted norm. Obasogie does not mine the uniqueness of the blind experience as much as he highlights the commonalities with visual perception.

For example, as alluded to above, Obasogie argues that his respondents characterize their non-visual sensory experiences as only proxies for the “real” information about race, which is visual. These other sensory experiences, he concludes, “do not make up the substance of race for blind respondents” (p. 64). In fact, even when his respondents directly raise the idea that their experience of race as a blind person might be unique, Obasogie downplays any possible differences between blind and sighted experiences of race. This is exemplified in the following description of one of his respondents, Jack. “Some blind respondents, like Jack, acknowledged that sometimes ‘it’s an asset to be blind and not judge someone visually right off the top of your head. So many of my sighted friends looking at someone and judging the person immediately. I really have no way of doing that.’ But, this draws attention to how blindness might delay rather than preclude blind people’s ability to apprehend race without making their substantive understanding of it any different from that of their sighted peers” (p. 128). Rather than taking seriously Jack’s suggestion that being blind provides an experience of race and racialized assumptions distinct from his sighted friends, Obasogie dismisses Jack’s idea that his experience is different, arguing that it is merely a “delayed” rather than “truly distinct” perception of race. Not to mention, this “delay” may be important to explore in and of itself. Given the perspective advanced by critical disability studies, I am hesitant to be so quick to subsume

Jack’s perceptual experience of race as a blind person within the visual.

The sociology of perception is best defined not as another disciplinary subfield, but as a perspective relevant to the study of any area of sociology. It is helpful to think of this sensory perspective as directing our analytic attention to two key questions. First, what are the sensory processes that underlie what we study? And second, how might different sensory processes or a different set of sensory values lead to a different set of meanings? In our current cultural context of ocularcentrism, more often than not this means seeking previously unrecognized insights available through the rarely-foregrounded non-visual senses. Obasogie addresses the first question; indeed it is part of the motivation for his study. But he seems far less interested in the second, which may actually be the more powerful for problematizing taken-for-granted categories and meanings.

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*Black Women Against the Land Grab: The Fight for Racial Justice in Brazil*, by **Keisha-Khan Y. Perry**. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. \$25.00 paper. 213 pp. ISBN: 9780816683246.

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In *Black Women Against the Land Grab: The Fight for Racial Justice in Brazil*, Keisha-Khan Y. Perry analyzes land-rights social movements in Brazil. Perry’s focus is on the urban land-rights movement of the Gamboa de Baixo neighborhood in Salvador, Bahia, the site of her field research. Through her ethnographic fieldwork, she realizes that the land-rights organizations in Gamboa de Baixo, like many land-rights movements in Brazil, are largely organized and led by women—in this case, black women—whose experiences and activism are often unrecognized in the documentation of grassroots social movements.

With a thorough intersectional analysis, Perry is able to show that these organizations have been successful in challenging the displacement of poor, black people in Brazil’s new economy. Most importantly, she argues

that economic issues, such as land rights, are racialized issues. Perry makes a very important intervention in the understanding of race and black identity politics in Brazil by showing that by participating in grassroots movements, women felt more empowered by their activism and successes. During the process of fighting for their community's rights, they began to develop and express a politicized identity based on their social position not just as women, but as black women living in a racialized community. Perry argues that black identity politics in Brazil do not primarily center on cultural issues, as they do in the United States, but on a much broader issue: Black identity politics emerge during tensions around economic issues and specific social justice issues.

The book offers a wealth of ethnographic and statistical data to open a window into the complex lived realities of residents of the Gamboa de Baixo neighborhood. Perry captures important feelings (fear, frustration, loss, anger), as affect is also important data for highlighting the emotional and psychological bases for the grievances of the social movement she analyzes. She weaves in harrowing, heart-wrenching, and frightening experiences, which highlight the overall tensions this community faces: it is a community literally under siege by speculators, government officials, and unethical individuals who have determined that a formerly undesirable area, inherited by the descendants of the enslaved, is now prime oceanfront real estate. Finally, Perry makes a significant intervention in academic analyses and framing of the role of black identity and gender in reproducing social inequality in Brazil. In short, this is a very important book.

In the introduction to *Black Women Against the Land Grab*, Perry first challenges a problematic debate that has emerged within Brazilian studies outside of Brazil. There are some scholars whose work frames Brazil as a "racial democracy." According to this view, Brazil is a country without racism or without firm racial structures because of the country's history of miscegenation and the assumed "fluidity" of Brazil's racial categories. Perry challenges this perspective, showing that the issue is not whether or not there is "fluidity" in racial classifications but should be about how race, specifically

various forms of anti-black racism, unfolds in the everyday lives of Brazilians.

Nonetheless, there is a sector of academic literature outside of Brazil that presents any discussion of blackness or race in Brazil as African American imperialism or ethnocentrism. The critique of U.S. African American research on race in Brazil as being "ethnocentric" is particularly perplexing considering it has been nearly thirty years since Brazilian sociologists, such as former Brazilian president Henrique Cardoso, began rejecting the idea of a racial democracy in Brazil. Since the 1990s, there has been a wealth of published data showing a race-based disparity in education and other socio-economic markers. From a policy standpoint, some Brazilian politicians recognized that Brazil needed to address its race problem if the country was going to emerge as an economic superpower. Nonetheless, in this literature the idea of blackness or black identity in Brazil is assumed to be largely a product of African American imperialism or Brazilians attempting to imitate the African Americans they see on TV or hear on the radio.

Such a point of view, Perry argues, depends on the assumption that the African diaspora in Brazil and the United States is completely isolated from the rest of the African diaspora—and in the case of the Americas, it involves ignoring "America's" (regionally speaking) complicated and intertwined colonial history. Perry draws from a wealth of data, including research from Latin America that challenges the various discourses on "racelessness" in the Americas, independent human rights data collected by organizations such as the United Nations and Human Rights Watch, and the wealth of scholarship produced by Brazilian scholars who work in the area of black Brazilian and black women's studies. Perry reinforces the findings of her ethnographic data with these secondary sources. For those interested in Brazilian studies, the text provides the reader with a robust bibliography, which includes Brazilian black studies scholarship. Through her ethnography Perry includes both the voices of the community activists at her research site and the experiences she gained through participant observation in community groups. Through her thorough review of existing literature from

both inside and outside Brazil, she includes the voices of scholars whose work has largely been ignored outside of Brazil.

The text is so well written, well organized, and accessible that it is a welcome read for both Brazilian specialists and a general public who may be interested in understanding why the World Cup and Olympic protests started in Brazil's favelas (slums). Some of the chapter titles do not adequately reflect the chapters' content; however, since each chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter and since Perry's argument is so nuanced, it must have been difficult to figure out how to name the chapters. This is one of those texts where it is just best to read the book and try to avoid skimming it—it would be really easy to miss a detail central to Perry's argument that race, specifically anti-black racism, is still an issue—a gendered issue, at that—that affects the ability of Afro-descendants to fully access the promises and benefits of Brazilian citizenship. Instead of simply rejecting the significance of race, specifically blackness, and gender in Brazil, it is important to situate black identity in Brazil, in the United States, and in the diaspora, as being a part of a continuum in conversation with each other.

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*Imperialism and Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century: A System in Crisis*, by **James Petras** and **Henry Veltmeyer**. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. 247 pp. \$99.95 cloth. ISBN: 9781409467328.

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*Imperialism and Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century* is an ambitious book with the central thesis that "both the capitalist system of global production and the neoliberal world order are in crisis" (p. 3). The recession that originated around 2007, argue the authors, was symptomatic of a larger crisis in global capitalism as a mode of production. Since the 1970s, deregulation, financialization, and neoliberalism have exposed more and more of the world's people to marketized production relationships. The result has been unprecedented inequalities in income

and wealth, such that the vast majority are losers in the current system and only a handful of economic elites (namely, successful capitalists in the Global North) are winners. Nor is the prognosis good. The authors predict that "we are headed toward a steeper decline than what was experienced during the Great Recession" (p. 12). As things get worse, the legitimacy of capitalism will be called into question, and, presumably, a revolutionary class movement will arise to usher in a new, post-capitalist system.

As this summary of the argument makes clear, the book sits squarely in a certain, very orthodox, Marxist tradition of political economy. It proceeds as a series of essays each describing some aspect of the global economy through the prism of "capitalism in crisis." Chapter One presents secondary data on global income inequality and interprets this data as evidence of profound crisis. Chapters Two through Four focus on Latin America, and they explore issues of development, land politics, and economic performance in the region going back several decades. Chapters Five and Seven offers somber predictions concerning the United States' potential to remain an economic superpower in the new world order. Chapters Six and Eight look at "extractive imperialism," in particular how the U.S. state and U.S. firms exploit migrant labor from poorer countries such as Mexico. Chapters Nine, Ten, and Eleven make a broad theoretical argument about the politics of neocolonialism and neoliberalism, with the authors arguing that systems of capitalism and democracy have finally been "unmasked" as imperialism (p. 15). Chapter Twelve offers a new interpretation of the political events in the Middle East that have been referred to as the Arab Spring as essentially a class struggle. Chapter Thirteen is not a conclusion per se, but rather a clarion call for class analysis as a lens for understanding the world today.

The chapters vary in quality. In general, the chapters on Latin America are strongest, focused as they are upon detailed descriptions of particular events in particular countries. Chapter Three, for example, is about land struggles in Latin America. It delineates three "paths towards land reform" (p. 76): state-led, market-assisted, and led by