

Culture



Margaret Critchlow RODMAN, *Deep Water: Development and Change in Pacific Village Fisheries*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1989. 173 pages, U.S. \$18.95

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the Cuban, Haitian and New Orleans examples in order to give their work a pan-Caribbean scope, but the inclusion is a bit parenthetical in relation to the rest of the book, which focuses on the Commonwealth countries. One might also question the selection of Hosay rather than Phagwa, another Indian festival which is arguably better known in Trinidad and which contributed to the symbolism of Minshall's 1983 Carnival band, "River", which the authors discuss extensively. I would also like to have seen a discussion of the many new carnivals that have arisen throughout the eastern Caribbean in the past three decades, each of them an attempt to adapt the Trinidadian format to local traditions and interests.

A more serious problem brings us back to the Coffee-Table genre. The emphasis on brilliant, glossy photography is commendable, but not at the expense of factual accuracy and other editorial standards that one rightfully expects. In the discussion of the Toronto Caribana, for example, the following are representative of the *errata* that I found within the span of three pages: 1) A long quote is incorrectly attributed to a journalist (p. 174, n. 21) - in fact, it comes originally from Austin Clarke, the Caribbean-Canadian writer; 2) Ken Shah, a masquerade band leader of Indo-Trinidadian ancestry, has his name anglicized as "Shaw" (pp. 175, 176); Elmore Daisey, a former carnival organizer, has his name misspelled as "Elmo" (p. 175); pre-Caribana ferry cruises that take place for upwards of a week are limited to a single night (p. 176); University Avenue, where the carnival takes place, is described as four miles long and sloping downward (p. 176) - the actual parade route is half that distance, and one would probably need a surveyor's instrument to detect any slope. I could continue this litany with both trivial and more substantive examples, but the point is that Coffee-Table Anthropology should not be an excuse for carelessness.

Shortcomings aside, this is a book that will be appreciated by Caribbean scholars from a variety of fields and by others with interests in festivity and popular culture. Like the museum collection that it commemorates, the book gives a distinctive and fascinating tradition of the showcase that it deserves.

Margaret Critchlow RODMAN, *Deep Water: Development and Change in Pacific Village Fisheries*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1989. 173 pages, U.S. \$18.95.

by John B. Gatewood
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Vanuatu (formerly, the Anglo-French colony of the New Hebrides), with a 1984 population of approximately 128,000, is one of the newly independent countries in the Pacific. Since achieving independence in 1980, Vanuatu has pursued a non-alignment policy with foreign powers. Such a policy is consistent with the goal of "self-reliance", which seems to be the key national value. This political stance raises practical problems, however, for the country must find a way to achieve economic development and overcome a trade imbalance without becoming dependent on foreign aid or going deeply into debt.

Finding solutions to this national problem is all the more difficult because "development" means various things to various local groups. Government planners regard development as anything that will balance international trade, whether achieved by substituting local products for foreign ones or by increasing exports. Small producers in the rural islands regard development as anything that increases their economic options while allowing them to maintain control over their productive labor. Foreign volunteers, primarily CUSO workers, are generally committed to a "small is beautiful / appropriate technology" concept of development.

Rodman's book is a very accessible (academic citations occur only in chapter endnotes), descriptive account of small-scale development projects in Vanuatu. Although copra has been and remains the principal cash-crop, Rodman focuses almost exclusively on efforts to develop a new resource: fish living in "deep-water" (100-400 m.) where reefs drop off toward the ocean floor. Whereas many of the Melanesian islanders have traditions of lagoon and reef fishing, they are generally ignorant concerning deep water species and how to catch them, and this is what the Village Fisheries Development Program is trying to redress. The hope is that exploitation of these new fisheries (handlining for snapper, mahimahi, and poulet) will not only increase the supply of fresh fish for local consumption, but also, if properly processed, provide exports for an international restaurant market.

As of 1985, the VFDP had made strides toward developing a marketing infrastructure and had directly supported about 100 "projects", ranging in scale from single outboard-powered canoes to fifteen motorized boats. Rodman describes two of these projects in detail. The first is the story of a single motorized fishing boat in the village of Longana, Ambae Island. The other project involves fifteen motorized boats under the auspices of a fishing association in Port Olry, Espiritu Santo.

Rodman's general approach is historical and highly personalized. The second chapter, entitled *Fieldwork*, recounts Rodman's own history in Vanuatu and the conditions surrounding her research. The third chapter discusses the role of fish in the native cuisine. The fourth chapter outlines Vanuatu's history from first European contact to 1985. The fifth and sixth chapters focus on planners' hopes regarding fisheries development. The seventh and eight present the two case studies of actual projects.

The last two chapters reiterate previous points while assessing, equivocally, whether the projects should be considered successes or failures. Using the criterion of persistence, which looms paramount in the minds of VFDP officials, the two projects would qualify as successes, for they have managed to keep going over two or three years. Similarly, if one took the native viewpoint and asked only if new economic opportunities had been created, then again the projects are successful. If, however, one were to judge on the basis of a realistic accounting of profits, then the answer would almost certainly be negative, for the persistence of the projects seems to depend heavily on government subsidy and volunteer workers. Although the introduction of deep water fishing techniques and subsidized equipment has provided Vanuatu villagers a new means of obtaining cash, they show very little interest in becoming "full time" fishermen. Fishing remains, like copra, part of a simple commodity economy.

In sum, Rodman's vivid and personalized writing style make this an excellent ethnography for introductory anthropology classes. I would also recommend it for courses on contemporary Oceanic cultures or Third World development. Maritime anthropologists are likely to be a bit disappointed, however, given the book's title, by the scant attention (only five pages, pp. 70-75) given to fish ecology, fishing strategy, and technical details on handline fishing.

Richard HANDLER, *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Québec*, Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988. 217 pages, \$15.75 (paperback).

by Gerald L. Gold
York University

This study is of particular interest to Canadian anthropology as an "ethnography of two discourses that feed off each other": the discourse of Québec nationalism and that of Québec social science. In practice, this book is primarily a study of national-

ism and deals only peripherally with Québec social science. Its vitality originates with Handler's 1977 fieldwork and from an imaginative analysis of texts, ranging from programmatic statements which Lionel Groulx penned sixty years ago to the Charter of the French Language and other documents produced by the Parti Québécois (P.Q.) government.

From the outset, Handler demonstrates that ethnic nationalism in Québec is based on the premise that Québécois culture is a "bounded unit" and that the Québec nation is depicted in nationalist rhetoric as a collective individual. In this objectification, history is reinterpreted and a Québec peasantry emerges in the structural turmoil of the 19th century. The reader is asked to accept the primacy of this primordial theme and there is no consideration of any situational context of nationalism or identity. In this way, the "negative vision" of a perpetually threatened "collective individual" can be found in both the writings of Groulx, René Lévesque and in the statements of informants. To these nationalists, Federalism and English-Canadians represent contamination, danger and imprecision - an aberrance from the "natural" or "normal" nation.

From the collective individual, Handler adeptly turns to the creation of the "true Québécois culture" by examining the objectification of tradition in rural Québec folk dancing. The folk society of French-Canadian social science (which somehow ends with Rioux, Guindon and Garigue) is demonstrated to be different from the Folk Society of Miner and Redfield. Like Garigue, Handler questions the appropriateness of the concept of a folk society as applied to Québec, and he shows graphically how Barbeau and Rioux created their folk societies out of a context of continuous change. Since the discourse of Québec social science is quintessential to Handler's thesis, it is disappointing to see that this discussion does not introduce Luc Lacourcière and the political and intellectual significance of the Archives de Folklore at Université Laval. A more serious lacuna is that Handler does not account for the historical materialist perspective of Québec as a peasant society that was introduced by Breton, Bernier and others during the years when the P. Q. held power.

A denouement is Handler's ethnography of Québec cultural policy. Primary documents and interviews are used to knit links between pre-1960 cultural policies and the rise of the Ministère des Affaires culturelles. Though this discussion is effective, it should be placed in the context of the P.Q.'s rhetoric of social development. The first ads that mention the P.Q. to farmers in Kamouraska County,