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Author(s): Simon Ottenberg
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two decades ago: five of the ten chapters were published between 1975 and 1979, and Okely makes few attempts to update them. Thus, while Okely may have anticipated contemporary issues, her explication of them here appears outdated, naive, and theoretically unsophisticated. Okely's book is best read, then, in much the same way Okely reads De Beauvoir: as a document of a particular moment in feminist history, rather than for its theoretical or methodological insights. Her final and most recent chapter, "Defiant Moments: Gender, Resistance, and Individuals" (1991), does give a glimpse of what the other chapters could have offered if Okely had updated and reformulated them. It is our loss that she has not.

Fran Mascia-Lees
Simon's Rock College of Bard

Playing on the Mother-Ground: Cultural Routines for Children's Development. David F. Lancy. New York: The Guilford Press, 1996, xii + 240 pp. $35.00, cloth; $17.95, paper.

This is a study of childhood learning between the ages of six and thirteen in the Kpelle Liberian village of Gbarngasuakwelle, carried out in the 1970s. Lancy, a psychologist turned ethnologist, employed a cognitive approach to learning, in agreement with villagers that at some six years of age their children developed "sense," so that learning cultural information could begin. Short discussions of earlier childhood and later adolescence occur, but the focus is on middle childhood.

Lancy, rightly I think, is convinced of the importance of childhood play in learning—what he terms playforms. Observation and imitation of adult and older children's behavior is another major mechanism for acquiring skills necessary for adult life; the process of transition from the first to the second learning forms is discussed, though observation and imitation also appear in children's play. The "mother-ground" of the book's title is a translation of a local term for the area where children play near village homes, generally under casual observation by older persons. Only a few skills—blacksmithing, weaving, and medicine making—require apprenticing, and some direct learning occurs in adult male and female secret societies, which were not open to the author.

Lancy frequently contrasts the informal learning processes of village children with directed learning in the West, arguing that most Western learning theories are not very helpful in his study, though finding stimulation in the work of L.S. Vygotsky. Lancy also draws interesting comparisons with his later Melanesian research. The book is systematic in that he contacted all
village children of the relevant ages, allowing him to develop tables of various kinds, such as the percentage of children of each age playing each game, which enrich his analysis without making it a major statistical one.

It is the ordinary "cultural routines" of child and adult life in this rice-growing community that have to be learned. An approach in terms of "culture as information" is employed. The book emphasizes the aims of adults in raising children and adult attitudes towards them. As elsewhere in Africa, villagers view children as economic assets. The more a family has the better to farm and do other work; children start carrying out labor when they have "sense," and sometimes earlier. Lancy does not view this as harsh treatment or as exploitative but, rather, as a way of learning adult tasks.

The various playforms are described, and often their relevance to learning is discussed; the significance of make-believe play to learning is stressed. A major section in the book deals with learning the forms of adult work, including medicine making, which is linked to the secret societies; here Lancy's information is limited.

Though Lancy is a keen observer of children, his approach raises questions. He claims that most village ritual life lies within the adult secret societies. But is there no learning for children in other rituals, such as marriage, funeral, harvest, and planting rites, as occurs in other West African societies? One derives little sense that there is much ritual life in the village beyond that of the secret societies. Elsewhere in Africa, children help to prepare for rites and often take part in them, thereby learning about belief, religion, and social relationships. Lancy's stress on play and informal learning of adult activities is important; he is one of a number of writers in recent years to stress the play role. Yet rituals may also involve learning for children.

Lancy's minimal discussion of infant and early childhood learning before the age of six also raises issues. In what ways do the two-plus years of breast feeding for children and the constant carrying by the mother or older girls, along with the relative absence of fathers, necessitate certain types of games to help lead the child away from the related emotional ties? What types of learning are required to do so? Don't unconscious habits of behavior learned in infancy and early childhood influence later learning patterns? These matters are not well answered.

The emphasis on "culture as information" directs attention away from emotional elements in learning. There seem to be few struggles to acquire skills, few conflicts, and only occasional references to punishment for misbehavior. Doesn't play arouse conflicts whose handling becomes learning situations about social relations? What is the impact of frequent illness and death among children on learning? The darker side of learning seems to be underemphasized. Only in the author's last chapter discussing Western influence on learning for villagers does he seriously perceive learning conflicts—here between the West and tradition. If the indigenous learning processes in his village are

more widespread in Liberia (he only claims this to be so for the Kpelle), are there elements in them which lead to the disastrous problems that Liberia has recently faced? Here it would have been useful to have Lancy's thoughts.

Despite these caveats, Lancy has produced an interesting and useful study of childhood learning in a society vastly different from ours in its attitude towards children and the acquisition of skills. He well proves his point about the value of play in childhood learning.

Simon Ottenberg
University of Washington


This timely, well-produced reference work is an update and revision of a 1985 volume. It explores the current refugee situation in the United States and offers detailed coverage of specific refugee groups. Extensive bibliographies follow each chapter. The volume is divided into three sections. The first includes two introductory chapters. In Chapter 1, Philip Holman describes the history of U.S. immigration and refugee policy and the role of government and voluntary agencies in resettlement. In the chapter's concluding section (p. 26), he reports that of the forty-nine million refugees and displaced persons in the world today (1 in every 115 people on earth), the United States has committed itself to resettling only about two-tenths of one percent. "Clearly, whether the United States were to resettle a few thousand more refugees, or a few thousand fewer would have little impact on the world refugee situation." The following chapter by David Haines provides a fine but all-too-brief overview of the problems refugees face in adapting to life in the United States. He deals with the expectations, values, and experiences they bring, the situation they find here, and the new lives they build. Although refugees take different paths in adjusting to American life, all these paths involve "some negotiation between adherence to traditional beliefs and behavior, on the one hand, and the embracing of American ways, on the other" (p. 50). Unlike other immigrants, they face special problems in reconstructing their lives because of the "triple assault on the meaning of their lives" (p. 50) arising out of the circumstances of their flight, the rupturing of their social relations, and the unplanned nature of their move to America.

The chapters in the second part of the volume take up some of these themes in reference to specific refugee groups. Most of the authors (listed in parenthe-