

derived from the complainant and to exploit prevailing rape myths and victim-blaming presuppositions. In “Questioning ‘Experts’ Knowledges” Marriner analyzes the practices of expert assessments by courts, the male biases permeating psy-disciplines, and the results of the distortion of women’s experiences by such disciplines. She shows the profound inadequacy of the use of such forms of expertise in sexual assault matters and calls on feminists to resist it through various forms of sociopolitical activities. She argues that such resistance also prevents cooptation of women’s grassroots practices by the expert industry.

This is a well-edited volume that is cohesive and comprehensive. Articles are well-written, well-documented, impassioned, critical, and highly accessible to the reader. Although they mostly provide grim assessments of the criminal justice system in relation to women’s freedoms and rights, however, they also contain many optimistic and practical strategies for improving the system and changing the general culture that informs it. As such, the book offers a unique contribution to earlier assessments of the Canadian criminal justice system. It is an important book well-suited to the needs of a variety of readers. Undergraduate and graduate students of women’s studies and socio-legal studies, in particular, can immensely benefit from it.

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GLOBAL COLONIALITY OF POWER IN GUATEMALA: RACISM, GENOCIDE, CITIZENSHIP

Egla Martínez Salazar
Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012

REVIEWED BY CAREN WEISBART

The legacies of colonialism continue today as marginalized women, men, and children throughout the world are subject to displacement, violence, and discrimination at the hands of an elite minority who seek increased power and profit. Egla Martínez Salazar’s *Global Coloniality of Power in Guatemala: Racism, Genocide, Citizenship* provides an in-depth look into the roots of power, and how it has been wielded to suppress any form of resistance to it. Martínez Salazar’s work offers a comprehensive interlocking analysis of oppression and resistance that will serve scholars and activists as they endeavour to ‘decolonize’ their own work. It also provides a timely analytical approach to understanding the geopolitics of knowledge and to debunking Euro-North American-centric epistemologies of development, progress, and democracy.

In the preliminary chapters, the author introduces the key arguments of her book and provides a fascinating genealogy of power struggles. She asserts that power struggles, such as the war on terror, share common ‘patterns’ as they are the result of modern, colonial, and global processes. Political agendas, pursued not only by corrupt governments in the Global South but also by powers in the Global North, have violently disrupted the lives of millions of people through the ‘thingification’ and

‘Othering’ of those who challenge the hetero-patriarchal nationalist agenda. Martínez Salazar thus argues that through interlocking processes of oppression and subjugation, state and corporate discourses and policies have attempted to ‘dehumanize’ these Others by erasing their histories and foreclosing on their political participation.

As an affront to this systematic process of erasure, the author briefly alludes to the socio-political and legal forms of organizing that pre-existed Spanish conquest in Guatemala. Although at times verging on an essentialized depiction of indigenous organization and Mayan cosmovision, she astutely asserts the importance of uncovering the historically silenced and appropriated knowledge of Mayan people. Such work, she argues, can contribute to efforts to challenge the racialized, ‘tribal,’ and ‘folkloric’ conceptualizations of Indigenous people that have been spun by those in positions of power since the arrival of the land-grabbing Spanish colonizers to the present-day race for mineral-rich territory led by the Otto Pérez Molina government and Canadian mining companies. While the book only briefly touches on the impact of this latter issue and the ensuing processes of criminalization against *campesinos/las*, it does offer important theoretical considerations for connecting racism, the Guatemalan genocide, and notions of citizenship to the present-day conflicts exploding in and around large-scale development projects.

Martínez Salazar brilliantly adapts the work of Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben to demonstrate how violence, including genocidal violence in the case of Guatemala, is rationalized through law, religion, education, and economics, and how certain lives become disposable. Drawing from Walter Dignolo’s (2007) work as a way of building

upon Agamben's (1998) discussion of the concentration camp, she argues that colonialism and slavery constitute the first materializations of the 'camp' where racialized, gendered, and class-based conceptualizations of citizenship determined who deserved to live and who stood in the way of 'modernity' and 'progress.' This analysis forms the basis of the main assertions in the book related to racialized feminicide.

Through her discussion of the heteropatriarchal system imposed during the conquest and its implications for current 'gender-sexuality relations' in Guatemala, Martínez Salazar coins the term 'racialized feminicide.' To explore this concept, she implements a decolonial analysis of the everyday lives and experiences of Mayan women as interlocked with mechanisms of power. This complex analytical assemblage provides an innovative approach to theorizing on how racism has been linked to genocidal policies, discourses, and practices. She argues that heteropatriarchal nationalist depictions of Mayan women lead to their exclusion as 'non-citizens' and serve to justify the often deadly violence that has been wielded against women and girls since the arrival of the Spanish to the present day.

By arguing that racialized feminicide has deep racist, heterosexist, and misogynist roots, she poignantly rejects the assertion made by some international human rights groups and some academics that the genocide that took place in Guatemala was not directed toward Indigenous people because of racism but because they were considered to be subversives. In order to demonstrate that genocide is indeed part of racist state policy, she draws attention to over 500 years of systematic discrimination and violence doled out against the Indigenous population and the ways in which they have been depicted as

threats to the nation-building agenda.

Martínez Salazar's work points to the possibility of providing a space, through academic research, for the marginalized and excluded voices of Guatemala's past and present. By including life histories, poetry and music of resilience and struggle, along with extensive quotes from Guatemalan activists and the family members of those who were tortured, disappeared, and murdered, the author directly contributes to the decolonial process of 'rehumaniz[ing]' those whom state and corporate forces seek to erase.

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GAGA FEMINISM: SEX, GENDER, AND THE END OF NORMAL

J. Jack Halberstam
Boston: Beacon Press, 2012

REVIEWED BY DANIELLE COOPER

Drawing inspiration from Lady Gaga, the American pop singer famous for such over-the-top costumes and performances as arriving at the Grammys in a gigantic see-through egg, J. Jack Halberstam's *Gaga Feminism* is intended to be a "fun-user-friendly, and quasi-academic hand-book for a new feminism." Halberstam's "new", or, "gaga" approach to feminism most notably embraces excess, mon-strosity, and most importantly, the phony or unreal. Halberstam argues that the phony or unreal is necessary in our era of "Occupy" movements, economic collapse, and rapidly changing gender and sexual relations. Although new," Halberstam that gaga feminism draws on a non-linear tradition of "anarchist" feminism that includes: Shulamith Firestone, Judith Levine, and Gayle Rubin. And for those who dislike or are disinterested in Lady Gaga, fear not: Halberstam positions Lady Gaga as a launching point for a much broader discussion. Analysis of the figure Lady Gaga herself is, somewhat surprisingly, almost entirely absent from the book. In doing so, *Gaga Feminism* mainly achieves its aim to be an accessible and widely appealing read. The book, however—and the book's underlying feminist approach—ultimately lacks that provocative quality its namesake Lady Gaga.

Gaga Feminism in addition to providing a manifesto for gaga feminism also discusses recent issues and phenomena pertaining to sexuality gender that are relevant to Halberstam's