

remains the most stigmatised method of generating an income, with sex workers attempting to hide the source of their income from their family and friends.

Overall, *Gringo Gulch* is an engaging and insightful read, and I would recommend it to anyone seeking to understand or challenge assumptions of sex tourists and sex workers. The book is also hugely beneficial in the understandings of social mobility and the role that the state plays in its 'permissive ambivalence' towards sex work.

Clare Anstock is an undergraduate student of social anthropology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. She has completed a study abroad option at Carleton University, Ottawa, with a focus on courses within the women's and gender studies department.

GODDESS AND GOD IN THE WORLD: CONVERSATIONS IN EMBODIED THEOLOGY

Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016

**REVIEWED BY SAMUEL
WAGAR**

This is such a fascinating and exceptional book in each of its several facets: It's a paired theological autobiography, a condensed intellectual history of feminist theology by two of the most prominent feminist women theologians, exceptionally erudite and fascinating, and a dialogue between two people who have been close friends and collaborators for forty years around theological issues they have been talking about over a lifetime. It is structured with alternating chapters by each author followed by joint summary chapters

in each section, so the distinct voices of the two are clear throughout.

Christ is a leading Goddess movement theologian, Plaskow is a Jew. They model embodied theology by talking in detail about their personal encounters with significant theological writing, with their engagement in different communities of faith, with experiences of the divine, and with their personal lives. Rich autobiographies emerge of these two women in two bodies engaged in the world, changing and being changed by the ideas they encountered. The autobiographies are integrally tied into the history and development of feminist theology over the past forty years or more, and so the founding of the first feminist theology study groups (often by one or the other of them), key lectures and books (some written by the two of them, some not), encounters with significant figures in the development of the theology, all are involved here in and through their lives.

The discussion of why Plaskow remained a Jew and continues to struggle inside that religion with male gendered language and problematic symbolism, while Christ moved from Catholicism through liberal Protestant Christianity to the Goddess movement, is used as an examination of the different feminist theologies and approaches to tradition, images, and experiences of the divine and of community. It is not as simple as an intellectual choice, nor does it come down to any single personal factor—for example Plaskow is a lesbian and Christ is heterosexual, Christ is Goddess-centred, Plaskow is not.

Condensing fifty years of scholarship from each of them, the rich and deep engagement which they each have with their theological sources and with the development of their personal theologies, the continued engagement with current thinking around gender, intersectionality, and

queer theory, this book is a marvelous opening up of a whole field of intellectual work.

They both model, as well as simple brilliance and deep engagement and understanding, a respectful and kind exploration of their agreements and disagreements. Not only the obvious—that Plaskow continues in her tradition of birth and Christ has moved away from hers—but deep disagreements around the nature of the divine, with Christ opting for a personal Goddess of love and good and Plaskow a God seen as the non-personal 'ground of all being' which includes good and evil in the creative process. Theology needs consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, and clarity, all of which they provide—this is a deep but very clear work, with great care taken to build solid arguments and return to first principles where necessary.

Plaskow's arguments were stronger for me, although I am theologically closer to Christ. Christ seemed to use special pleading in developing her model of the Goddess as personal love, and relied for evidence in her social justice case on the discredited Ancient Matriarchy theories of Marija Gimbutas. Christ defines one of their commonalities as "inclusive monotheism" which "affirms an intuition of the unity of being combined with the recognition of the necessity of a plurality of images to reflect all the diversity and difference in the world." This is close to the common theological position in Wicca, my religion, and I have pulled a great deal from the work of both these women.

One problem with reading this splendid book is that I feel compelled to follow up on some of the references they cite. Which is going to substantially increase my home library's holdings in feminist theology, and drain my bank account. Christ's blending of Whitehead and Hartshorne's process theologies seems

to be very fruitful so I'm going to be following up with her *Rebirth of the Goddess* and *She Who Changes*. Process theologies are pantheist and very relational, which is very much suited to Wicca and intuitively satisfies me.

Samuel Wagar is the Wiccan chaplain to the University of Alberta and a Doctor of Ministry student at St. Stephen's College in Edmonton.

ANCIENT SPIRIT RISING: RECLAIMING YOUR ROOTS & RESTORING EARTH COMMUNITY

Pegi Eyers
Kewadin, MI: Stone Circle Press,
2016

REVIEWED BY SHARON G. MIJARES

Ancient Spirit Rising is the recipient of a 2017 Next Generation Indie Book Award in the Current Events/Social Change category.

Ancient Spirit Rising: Reclaiming Your Roots & Restoring Earth Community is a very significant book for our time. It challenges current trends toward borrowing and using indigenous knowledge and related practices, and points out that this tendency further precipitates colonial thinking and intrusion upon the ways of indigenous people. Eyers lays out her case against these ongoing colonial-thinking practices, describing the many ways that white Europeans have intruded into indigenous societies, particularly those of North America. She challenges the booming trend "to borrow identities from other cultures." Given the number of white women re-creating sweat lodges, presenting

ceremonies (where permitted by indigenous peoples) and so forth, Eyers challenges these behaviors and asks why people are not, instead, cultivating their own indigenous roots. For example, why not learn more about the indigenous European Indigenous Knowledge traditions of Nordic and Celtic Paganism as well as a host of other EIK traditions from the UK, Baltic, Russian or Siberian lands? In short, Eyers discusses the current quest toward ancient ways of reverencing with ancestral practices and re-connecting to the earth and its spirits, but also asks readers to replace what she illustrates as an intrusive continuance of colonial thinking with practices related to one's own genetic history. One excellent quote supporting this theme notes that,

Our post-modern culture finds itself in a desperate need for Ancestors right now. The greatest threat today is the unraveling of the Web, which connects us to one another. Tracing the stories of our ancestors allows us to reach beyond our cultural borders to worlds not our own. The future may try to monopolize our attention, but some of our most fruitful lessons may come from connecting to our past. May your journey to the Ancestors yield both wisdom & compassion, which are their truest gifts to us.

Ancient Spirit Rising is filled with excellent, supportive quotes that add a lot to the author's points. It is also filled with terms and acronyms, noting the differences between IK (Indigenous Knowledge) and EIK (European Indigenous Knowledge), settler re-indigeneity and indigenous mind, as well as the ravages of Empire, patriarchy, hierarchy, ethnocide, capitalism, ecocide, racism, and white privilege, to name a few. Then each of the topics is addressed in depth with significant scholarly support, causing the readers to examine their practices and beliefs. Do we support true unity, or do we contribute to

ongoing intrusion into indigenous people's communities and lives?

This is a timely book in that humanity is in the midst of a mass migration, as well as the exposure to other cultures supported by modern technologies of the internet as well as travel. It is an unsettling time, and this has probably initiated the widespread urge to connect with nature traditions using ritual practices more connected to spiritual ancestry. The world religions no longer have the appeal of the past.

There are differing beliefs and responses within indigenous communities to this movement. Some are capitalizing on it by earning an income, for example, an indigenous person teaching students how to build and conduct a sweat lodge as well as other native practices for a fee. There are those who prefer to protect their tribal ways and not allow further appropriation or intrusion by settlers who, without thoughtfulness, bring the crimes of the past into the present. Then there are also other tribal peoples who go beyond ideas of further segregation and are, instead, joining with all races, nationalities, spiritual backgrounds, and so forth: increasing numbers of people are recognizing the important role of indigenous people in teaching us how to protect the well-being of all life and the future of the planet. *Ancient Spirit Rising: Reclaiming Your Roots & Restoring Earth Community* brings up many controversial and important issues, and stimulates significant thought. To what extent are we as human beings all connected?

The book also brings up the question of whether we are more influenced by our genes or the land to which we are born. Although this is discussed in her book, Eyers does not fully answer the question—primarily because it is an unknown factor. The author directs our intention to knowing our individual ancestral roots, and