

Recent Books on the South Pacific – Feb 2021

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Sociology

Desire, Obligation, Familial Love : Mother, Daughters, and
Communication Technology in the Tongan Diaspora / Makiko
Nishitani

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA: University of Hawaii Press, 2020

Includes Index ; Bibliographical references

x, 194p. ; 1 b&w illustration.

Includes Index

9780824881771

1. Tongans – Australia – Melbourne (Vic.) – Social life and customs.
2. Women foreign workers – Family relationships – Australia – Melbourne (Vic.)
3. Tongans – Australia (Vic.) – Communication – Case studies.
4. Mothers and daughters – Australia.

\$ 68.00 / HB

430gm.

Based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork among Tongan migrant mothers and adult daughters in Australia, anthropologist Makiko Nishitani provides a unique account of how gifts, money, and information flow along the connections of kin and kin-like relationships. *Desire, Obligation, and Familial Love* challenges the conventional discourse on

migration, which typically characterizes intergenerational changes from tradition to modernity, from relational to individual, and from obligation to autonomy and freedom. Rather, through an intimate examination of Tongan women's everyday engagement with kinship relationships, Nishitani highlights how migrant women and their daughters born outside Tonga together create a field of relationships with kin and kin-like people, and navigate between individualistic, personal desires and familial duties and obligations. Their negotiations are not limited to a local frame of reference, but encompass vast distances, including relationships with relatives in places like Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and the "home" island nation. Tongan women manage these relationships across diverse modes of communication: face-to-face interactions in homes and at church, lengthy telephone conversations on fixed phone lines in kitchens, and interactions on social media accessed on living room computers shared between neighboring households. Relationships between migrant mothers and second-generation daughters are suffused with warmth and empathy, as well as tensions and misunderstandings. Nishitani's work demonstrates the critical contemporary relevance of classical anthropological kinship studies and gift theories as tools that can help us to understand transnationalism in the "digital" age. Through reflections on feminist geography, social theory of technology, Bourdieu's field theory, and media studies, Nishitani makes a convincing call for anthropologists to use relationships rather than geographical places as a site of anthropological fieldwork in order to understand the sociality of diasporic people.

Filled with rich, intimate portrayals of diasporic women's everyday lives and the everyday politics of familial relationships, *Desire, Obligation, and Familial Love* will appeal to students and scholars of the anthropology of migration, of communication technologies and social media, and of gender and familial relationships, as well as to those interested in

fieldwork methodology, transnational and migration studies, and Pacific studies.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=750174>

The New Port Moresby : Gender, Space, and Belonging in Urban Papua New Guinea / Ceridwen Spark

Topics in the Contemporary Pacific Series

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA: University of Hawaii Press, 2020

xxii, 152p.

Includes Index

9780824881801

1. Women – Papua New Guinea – Port Moresby – Social conditions – Case studies.
2. Port Moresby – Social conditions – Case studies.
3. Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) – Social conditions.

\$ 64.00 / HB

382gm.

The New Port Moresby: Gender, Space, and Belonging in Urban Papua New Guinea explores the ways in which educated, professional women experience living in Port Moresby, the burgeoning capital of Papua New Guinea. Drawing on postcolonial and feminist scholarship, the book adds to an emerging literature on cities in the “Global South” as sites of oppression, but also resistance, aspiration, and activism. Taking an intersectional feminist approach, the book draws on a decade of research conducted among the educated professional women of Port Moresby, offering unique insight into class transitions and the perspectives of this small but significant cohort. *The New Port Moresby* expands the scope of research and writing about gendered experiences in Port Moresby, moving beyond the idea that the city is an exclusively hostile place for women. Without discounting the problems of uneven development, the author argues that the city’s new places offer women a degree of freedom and autonomy in a city predominantly characterized by fear and restriction. In doing so, it offers an ethnographically rich perspective on the

interaction between the “global” and the “local” and what this might mean for feminism and the advancement of equity in the Pacific and beyond. *The New Port Moresby* will find an audience among anthropologists, particularly those interested in the urban Pacific, feminist geographers committed to expanding research to include cities in the Global South and development theorists interested in understanding the roles played by educated elites in less economically developed contexts. There have been few ethnographic monographs about Port Moresby and those that do exist have tended to marginalize or ignore gender. Yet as feminist geographers make clear, women and men are positioned differently in the world and their relationship to the places in which they live is also different. The book has no predecessors and stands alone in the Pacific as an account of this kind. As such, *The New Port Moresby* should be read by scholars and students of diverse disciplines interested in urbanization, gender, and the Pacific. <http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=750175>
