

More widely, Bohstedt suggests that a combination of the changing location and nature of justice (less retaliatory than the eighteenth century), better organized military responses, better planned and more sustained philanthropic safety nets, and changes to the nature of poor relief, undermined the logic of provision politics by the early nineteenth century. The scale of this undermining, he suggests, is to be found reflected in responses to the crisis of 1810–1812 when “the main tradition of provision politics had been driven to the margins”, and small and more spontaneous instances of disorder and rioting came to be seen as something to be managed and reduced rather than actions by people who needed to be “mollified”. The final substantive chapter in turn deals with the death throes of provision politics in the period up to 1867, a period marked by the fact that “community politics gave way to class, and reciprocity now took shape in bitter battles rather than pragmatic bargaining”.

Of course, this brief review does not do justice either to the complexity of the arguments deployed or to the sheer scale of evidence assembled for this book. While I might disagree with the assertion that the period from 1812 marks such a clean break in the history of provision politics in particular, and such a sea change in the way that the poor negotiated in general, this is nonetheless an outstanding book. And as Bohstedt reminds us in his conclusion to the volume, the politics of provision is firmly set to become a very hot socio-political topic in the future. At a time when food-price inflation for the aged in Britain is running at close to 10 per cent per year, how long, we might wonder, until the language of necessity drives a new political radicalism when it comes to “provision”?

*Steven King*

*Intimate Labors. Cultures, Technologies, and the Politics of Care.* Ed. by Eileen Boris and Rhacel Salazar Parreñas. Stanford University Press, Stanford (Cal.) 2010. xiv, 340 pp. £61.47; \$70.00. (Paper: \$24.95; E-book \$24.95.); doi:10.1017/S0020859011000599

The arrest of Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the former Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, accused of sexually harassing a chambermaid in a hotel in New York in May 2011, brought into the limelight a group of workers who rarely receive any attention in journalism or academic literature. Hotel housekeepers, or chambermaids, are a typical example of “intimate labourers”, people whose work “revolves around the intimate and the bodily, belonging to those intimate labors associated with unpaid tasks done for the household and its members by wives, mothers, daughters, and previously slaves” (p. 3). This type of worker, but also forms of unpaid labour involving intimacy, are the focus of the volume “Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies, and the Politics of Care”, edited by Eileen Boris and Rhacel Salazar Parreñas.

Intimacy and labour are often considered as having hardly anything in common, intimacy belonging to the private sphere and labour to the public sphere. Whereas historically there has always been a close relationship between labour and intimacy, as the existence of the age-old professions of prostitution and domestic work show, contemporary societies, and in particular those that are affected by global capitalism, are characterized by an intensification of the commodification and proliferation of intimate labour. Home health aides, hotel housekeepers, hostesses, escorts, manicurists, and massage therapists are examples of a large variety of workers who are involved in intimate labour.

In their introduction the editors define intimate labour as activities that “promote the physical, intellectual, affective, and other emotional needs of strangers, friends, family, sex partners, children, and elderly, ill, or disabled people” (p. 2). This type of labour includes not only various forms of care work, domestic work, and sex work, but also a wide range of other forms of paid and unpaid work which do not normally fall within the category of “labour”, such as the donation of sperm to IVF clinics, the care of transgender individuals, and the adoption of foreign children. The wide variety of activities that can be categorized as intimate labour shows the fluid boundaries between home and work, productive and non-productive work, care and economy, the public and the private. Intimate labour differs from emotional labour, which refers to “a form of face-to-face labor in which one displays certain emotions to induce particular feelings in the client or customer” (p. 6).<sup>1</sup>

As the editors state, intimate labour may include emotional labour, yet emotion is not its main characteristic; many intimate labourers do not need to regulate their emotions to perform their jobs. It also differs from reproductive labour, as it involves much more than the “invisible” work of women carried out to sustain households and families. Intimate labour is productive labour, as the authors in this volume claim, because it involves the exchange of money: it is situated in the (formal and informal) labour market, and subject to market forces (p. 9). Economic globalization and neo-liberalism have equally affected the proliferation of intimate labour in many different ways, leading to new forms of social inequality. The authors further try to understand “what happens when intimate labor enters the marketplace and becomes paid both in terms of working conditions and the value of the worker herself” (p. 11). Gender, race, and class are used as key concepts to explain the ways in which power relations have changed as an effect of global economic transformations.

The book is divided into three parts, each being preceded by a short introduction in which the articles are placed in a broader context. The first part, entitled “Remaking the Intimate: Technology and Globalization”, focuses on the ways in which technologies have redefined intimate relations. Technology and intimacy have long been seen as opposites, but the articles in this part show the close relationship between the two in contemporary society. New technologies, such as in-vitro fertilization and digital ways of communication, have led to new forms of intimate labour.

Kalindi Vora describes, for example, how call-centre workers in India perform “affective labour” in their relationships with American customers. She argues that this type of work adds value to the employers’ economic performance but it has little to no effect on their own communities and daily life. Rene Almeling analyses the ideas of commercial agencies and donors of sperm and eggs about “cells and bodies, supply and demand, and motherhood and fatherhood”, to explain why eggs and egg donors are valued more highly than sperm and sperm donors. She concludes that the commodification of eggs and sperms is highly gendered, with agencies approaching male and female donors in very different ways. Men are seen as “distant and calculating donors” mainly interested in the financial aspect of the transaction and not attaching emotional value to their sperm, whereas women are seen as “altruistic helpers” for whom donation is an emotional experience.

The second part, “Creating Intimate Boundaries: Cultural and Social Relations”, looks at the relations of various types of domestic and sex worker and their clients and

1. Arlie Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley, CA, 1983).

employers. The authors show the complexities involved in these encounters and reject the idea that combining personal relations with economic transactions would automatically “contaminate and corrupt intimacy” (p. 95).

María de la Luz Ibarra discusses, for example, two cases of Mexican-American providers of private elderly care in California who have formed relationships of “deep alliance” with their wards. She discovered that many elderly-care workers prefer to work in the informal sector because they can establish emotional ties – “deep alliances” – with their patients and assist them in the last phase of their lives. Although their “emotional labour” is unrewarded, their moral fulfilment is, according to her informants, much greater. Rhacel Parreñas describes the work of Filipina hostesses in Tokyo and the different ways in which they deal with intimacy and sexual relations with customers. In principle hostesses are not allowed to have sex with customers, but the boundaries are fluid and women have varying attitudes towards intimacy. One of the main conclusions of the chapters in this part of the book is that workers are able to maintain their identities as workers although the boundaries between public and private are sometimes blurred.

The third part of the book, “Organizing Intimate Labor: Politics and Mobilization”, focuses on the different ways in which people who perform intimate labour organize themselves to protect their own rights. A brief look at the history of domestic and sex work shows the challenges and obstacles that workers experience in these sectors. In many cases domestic and sex workers have been consistently neglected by the mainstream labour movement. The fact that women from lower socio-economic classes and of immigrant background dominate these sectors has not facilitated their inclusion. Yet, “intimate labourers” have organized themselves in their own ways, achieving remarkable successes, as some of the chapters in this part illustrate.

Eileen Boris and Jennifer Klein, for example, describe the struggle for the recognition of home care as professional care in the United States, and the consequences for the protection of home-care workers. Miliann Kang looks at Asian manicurists in New York and the different ways in which their customers have responded to their attempts to improve their working conditions. She argues that a better understanding of the dynamics of intimate labour will help to support the efforts of workers in the service sector.

The book ends with two general chapters, in one of which Viviana Zelizer reflects on the complex relationship between care and labour, and the other by Dorothy Sue Cobble about the ways in which “intimate labourers” have organized themselves and the implications for labour unions and other forms of collective worker mobilization. She argues that labour unions should recognize the value of intimate labour, as intimacy and economy are increasingly conflating in the twenty-first century.

This book, with case studies from the United States and Asia, offers an interdisciplinary contribution to the field. It contains fascinating essays, most of which have already been published as book chapters or journal articles. All the authors have used qualitative methods to study their topics, resulting in detailed ethnographic and historical descriptions and strong interview quotes. Those interested in quantitative data will be disappointed, but intimate labour is a type of labour that has not been documented well as it often takes place in the shadow of the formal labour market. Statistical data are therefore lacking in many cases.

The selection of articles, and in particular the combination of paid and unpaid forms of intimate labour, will make a useful contribution to global labour studies. The book is a gateway to understanding how intimacy and labour organize themselves in both formal and

informal social structures. In addition, it illustrates the ways in which intimacy has become linked with issues of ethnicity, sexuality, race, class, and other power relations in the context of globalization as well as continued socio-political and economic transformations.

*Marina de Regt*

TULLY, JOHN. *The Devil's Milk. A Social History of Rubber*. Monthly Review Press, New York 2011. 480 pp. Ills. \$24.95; doi:10.1017/S0020859011000605

The author begins by describing the surprise of his friends that he should be writing a history of rubber. Academics might rather ask whether another history of rubber is really needed, but Tully's approach is novel, in that he sets out to write a social history, rather than repeating the economic or technological stories that have prevailed to date. An unashamed Marxist, who has himself worked on the shopfloor of a rubber factory, John Tully conceives of social history in a particular way. His story tends to pit grasping and greedy planters and industrialists against a combative and heroic workforce. There is little room here for cross-class unity emerging from loyalty to commodity and firm, despite some occasional evidence for such very different scenarios.

The writing is clear, and pitched at the general reader, albeit with some bonuses for a more specialized audience. The author has criss-crossed the world in search of archives. In Akron, Ohio, he has used university archives, as company papers, unfortunately, have either been destroyed, or are not open to researchers. In Europe, he has relied heavily on the former Public Record Office, and on less obvious sources, such as the State Museum in what was formerly Auschwitz. Unlike other authors on global or south-east Asian rubber, Tully has included bits and pieces on Papua New Guinea in his story, exploiting colonial archives from his base in Australia, and this is most welcome.

However, this is no general social history of rubber. Tully ends in 1945, with only a short epilogue to bring his story up to date. Moreover, the book dwells at great length on a limited number of cases, leaving out much else in the field. One might respond that nobody can cover everything, and that the book is already very long. However, Tully wastes a great deal of space unnecessarily, by covering old topics in a very traditional manner. There is little or nothing new in the sections on pre-colonial Mesoamerica, the early development of the Western rubber industry, or the gutta-percha saga, on which he has already published a separate article. The writing is enlivened by illustrations and anecdotes, but the latter sometimes become excessive and anachronistic. The reader might also wish to be spared repeated long lists of what rubber was used for.

That said, there is a welcome emphasis on the role of rubber in World War II, which has generally been omitted in the veritable avalanche of publications on that titanic conflict. Unfortunately, however, Tully misses a crucial and well-known point, namely that synthetic rubber did not entirely substitute for natural rubber. For large tyres, in particular, natural rubber remained essential. Unfortunately, he has not consulted Peter Morris's magisterial D.Phil. thesis of 1982, "The development of acetylene chemistry and synthetic rubber by I. G. Farbenindustrie Aktiengesellschaft, 1926–1945", which points out this basic fact. In addition, Tully states that American synthetic rubber was made from coal and oil in the war years, whereas it came mainly from surplus grain, a little from oil, and not at all from coal. It is unfortunate that he does not refer to Mark Finlay's important