

biology and 'genes'. Wade includes disciplines of anthropology, philosophy, history, and feminism. With this array of dimensions that approach 'race', one zeroes in on the cultural mediation of gender, nature, and culture itself. 'Race' is defined 'as invoking a discourse that makes appeal to such notions as nature (including human nature), heredity, biology or genetics ... (p. 37).

In short, how living people think racially, the paradigms on which they draw in specific contexts and historical circumstances, the fashions, metaphors, paradigms, and hypostases available for such thinking (and feeling), and the ways in which creativity enters all this impinge on a subject that is domain- and context-specific. The polarity of permanence-continuity/change-instability creates a dynamic analytical and culturally mediated theme that loses its clear contrast as social passages from A to B or B to A take place in discourses that evoke 'race'. And, if I understand Wade properly, as passage continues further and further on either side of the divide, the contrast again attenuates.

Illustrations of this approach emerge in a discussion of telogony, 'the theory ... according to which a male who reproduced with a given female could influence the offspring the female had by subsequent mates' (p. 95). As people think about what they take to be the divides between biology and society, nature and nurture, genes and environment (p. 93), their thought processes may take them closer and closer to the region where that which is taken to contrast turns out to be something like what the African-American author Amiri Baraka called the 'changing same'. Moreover, in the approach taken and advocated in this book, the analyst of history and contemporary thought in multiple changing and enduring cultural systems must take into account not only the social constructions of biology, but also the biological constructions of culture. All this takes us back to the boundaries and dimensions introduced above.

Wade returns again and again in this work to the important distinction between horizontal and vertical conceptualizations of racial thinking. In the horizontal we have the contrast introduced at the outset of this review, where 'biology' and 'culture' are initially opposed as an A/B contrast, the legion of affinities emerging in humanity. Without a horizontal perspective this book would not be possible, nor would the definitions and qualifications make sense. The vertical approach, which signals the fount of racism in Western societies (or at least Anglo-Western societies), is that racial thinking (culture) is predicated on a multiplicity of ideas – scientific, social scientific, humanistic, and other (inside of and outside of the academy) – that biological processes form the genetic basis upon which cultural discourses operate. By negating the

vertical in favour of the horizontal, a number of distinctions are made that drive this book from one chapter to another. The author interrogates the distinctions among, and affinities of, processes of essentialism and naturalism, as these crop up in multiple dimensions on the borders of the aforementioned disciplines.

This book is not an easy read but it does deserve careful attention by those willing to range through a myriad of local-level studies to raise (or 'beg', which is in my estimation inappropriately used these days) questions that do not often address the central dimensions of 'race'. As scholars engage in the discussions that parts of this book may engender, I hope they remember an admonition long ago defined by the late Morton Fried, when he wrote of 'race' as a four-letter word that hurts.

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CAMERON, DEBORAH & DON KULICK. *Language and sexuality*. xvi, 176 pp., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2003. £42.50 (cloth), £15.95 (paper)

Sexuality has recently gained analytic attention within sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. In their brief and lively textbook *Language and sexuality*, Cameron and Kulick synthesize some of this scholarship and put forth a new framework for future research in this dynamic field.

The culmination of a series of earlier articles by Kulick, the book attempts to shift the field away from a concern with sociocultural identity and toward a psychoanalytically influenced framework centring on desire. Chapter 1 lays the foundations for this argument by introducing the key terms sex, gender, and sexuality, and sketching some relationships between language and sexuality. Chapter 2 connects Foucauldian and linguistic understandings of discourse, illustrated through a range of examples. Chapter 3 outlines the relationship between gender and sexuality, considering several examples of how they are mutually constituted in discourse. In chapter 4, the authors set up the target of their critique of sexual identity: research on lesbian and gay language. They argue that any study of sexual identity is inadequate unless subordinated to the study of desire, which they see as fundamental to sexuality. Chapter 5 sketches a psychoanalytic theory of desire, using the work of Freud, Lacan, Deleuze and Guattari, and Foucault. Viewing identity as deliberate and intentional,

the authors instead embrace a focus on unconscious phenomena, such as repression. Finally, chapter 6 suggests the psychoanalytic concept of identification in place of identity and links the study of language and desire to broader political movements.

The publication of a textbook on this long-marginalized topic is welcome. Yet the volume may mislead readers new to the field because of its partisan perspective. Although the authors occasionally acknowledge identity as part of sexuality, their position is ambivalent at best. Their overwhelming focus is on desire as an alternative rather than an addendum to identity, a viewpoint encapsulated in the recommendation to 'leave [identity] behind and forget about it for a while' (p. 105). The authors rightly emphasize desire as an aspect of sexuality that deserves greater attention from linguists. However, as we have discussed elsewhere, sexual desire is always articulated through complex processes of identity positioning. Indeed, to have or express a sexual desire is to take up or be assigned a sexual subject position. Such processes are not restricted to intentional acts of self-labelling – the focus of Cameron and Kulick's critique – but rather are produced and negotiated ideologically. (The authors' vigorous objections to identity are particularly surprising since much of their own previous research relies so heavily upon the concept; it may be for this reason that the book is sometimes inconsistent on this point.)

The authors base their critique on the incorrect assumption that linking linguistic practice to identity is essentialist. More current research on language and sexuality avoids essentialism by drawing on anthropological theories of indexicality and performativity. Yet Cameron and Kulick's literature review overlooks this theoretical move. By critiquing a few studies and positing these as representative, the authors take an oppositional stand to the entire field, thus missing an opportunity to make common cause with researchers who share many of their theoretical and political commitments.

Although the authors state that they seek to broaden language and sexuality research, their privileging of the erotic excludes vital areas of sexual life. Indeed, many aspects of sexuality do not necessarily involve sexual desire at all, such as reproduction and rape. Sexuality is better conceptualized as a broad set of ideologies, practices, and identities, which together give sociopolitical meaning to the body as an eroticized and/or reproductive site. Such an approach imagines the field of language and sexuality as an inclusive, diverse, and culturally grounded intellectual project. By contrast, the authors' stated goal of moving 'beyond' identity and toward desire unwittingly strips away the social and cultural location of sexual subjectivity.

Despite its flaws, this ambitious book takes an important first step in ushering in the next stage of language and sexuality research. By adding their voice to recent work calling attention to the linguistic dimensions of sexuality, Cameron and Kulick help legitimize this topic. To the authors' credit, they do not simply summarize previous work but offer fruitful research directions, most notably a greater consideration of desire. Another strength is the volume's collaborative nature: the influence of Cameron, a leading feminist linguist, is evident in the inclusion of a feminist perspective that enriches the argument, while Kulick's anthropological background adds a needed cross-cultural dimension. *Language and sexuality* will no doubt inspire researchers to greater theoretical sophistication and a more critical perspective on desire, identity, and sexuality. Both students and scholars will find this highly readable volume provocative and controversial, but never dull.

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CHRISTIANSEN, MORTEN H. & SIMON KIRBY (eds). *Language evolution*. xvii, 395 pp., figs, tables, bibliogr. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2003. £60.00 (cloth), £17.99 (paper)

Despite its title, this volume is not concerned with how languages evolve. Its topic is a quite different question: the evolutionary emergence of language in our species. Debates in this area have been notoriously fractious, and this wide-ranging collection gives an accurate picture of the current interdisciplinary state of play.

The book consists of seventeen chapters written by twenty-one authors. The editors' opening chapter surveys the difficulties facing scholars in addressing what may be 'the hardest problem in science'. In the second chapter, however, Steven Pinker is already undermining the editors' whole approach: language is a biological adaptation like any other, he argues, and evolved in the normal Darwinian way. There is therefore no 'hard problem' at all. James Hurford agrees that language is part of human biology. But he views it also as embedded in uniquely human social and cultural processes, the details of its evolution remaining elusive at best. Simon Kirby and Morten Christiansen concur that a complete theory of language evolution will necessarily be multi-faceted: 'We should not expect a single mechanism to do all the work'. Frederick Newmeyer surveys a range of recent evolutionary scenarios, bringing out