

and societal change, a dimension addressed by socio-technical transitions scholarship focusing on the co-evolution of technologies, societal institutions and culture.

*Innovations in Sustainable Consumption* represents an important contribution to questions concerning the nature of inter- and cross-disciplinarity in sustainability research. Throughout, authors place emphasis on understanding multiple and intersecting processes spanning everyday practices, socio-technical systems and the macro-economic and political economy of consumption. However, the challenges associated with such nascent debates are evident throughout the discussion; some contributions are more explicit than others in their consideration of the capabilities of an integrated approach. Nevertheless, within the context of the wider debates surrounding interdisciplinary work in sustainability research, this volume represents an important step along the way in laying the groundwork for further interdisciplinary rapport and the development of integrated policy approaches.

Perhaps one of the volume's greatest strengths is its orientation towards the applied implications of sustainable consumption scholarship. Identifying distinct domains in which innovation will be required, experts outline novel policies and pathways for economic and socio-technical transitions that are grounded in an appreciation of the complexities of everyday life as a context for human behaviour. Recognising the limitations of conventional policy approaches in bringing about desired changes, it is argued that, in order to facilitate a transition towards sustainability, transition policies must move beyond a fixation upon technological change to focus on fundamentally reconfiguring our social institutions, norms and lifestyles. In summary, this exceptional volume is an essential read for anyone who wants to know where sustainable consumption research is heading. In laying a broad platform for interdisciplinary debate and teaming with directions for policy, further exploration and research, it will be of particular benefit to students, educators, researchers and policy-makers working to understand and advance the study of sustainable consumption.

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**Partitioned lives: The Irish borderlands**, by Catherine Nash, Bryonie Reid and Brian Graham, Farnham, Surrey, Ashgate, 2013, 170 pp., £60 (hardback), ISBN 9781409466727

Entering as we do a decade of commemoration of political developments that were crucial in the making of Ireland's present, this book about the border and its landscapes is an exploration of approaches to the past and to reconciliation in a post-conflict Ireland. The legacies of the Troubles, particularly in the borderlands, have left bitter and contested memories of division and violence. As the authors say, the book's 'starting points were not scholarly theories and concepts of political boundaries', ... but 'interest in the ordinary and everyday life of the borderlands' (p. 143). *Partitioned lives* is very much in the mould of recent postcolonial studies in subverting the meta-narrative of the Irish border as a political divide to focus instead on everyday stories and experiences of people

living in the borderlands, based on intensive interviews with local communities in recent years. The major focus is on the period from 1950 to the present.

The borderlands have been doubly peripheralised on the edges of two states for almost a hundred years, in a geographical patchwork of local settlements laid down in the seventeenth century where Protestant populations thin out southwards and westwards. Within this mosaic the authors explore the mundane practices of everyday life that gave meaning to the emergence of the border landscapes. In the early post-partition days as the two states meshed along the frontier these were manifested in prosaic practices, texts and techniques such as printed proclamations, regulations, official uniforms, new road signs and the colour symbolism of flags and street furniture. Political realities suddenly intruded into everyday life in the 1920s, when B-Specials searched trains, telling 'respectable people who are on their way to visit friends in the 6 counties' not to come back 'if they are from the Free State' (p. 37). Locals were given passbooks for regular crisscrossing of the Border.

Customs administration brought a material geography of buildings and barriers, personnel and paraphernalia channelling movement along limited numbers of corridors, with seals on railway wagons, and inspection of goods and animals crossing the boundary. During the Second World War, the Free State prohibited shops within a three-mile radius of the border because people were evading duties by escaping with goods 'over the fields at the back across the Border' (p. 34).

In the fifties and sixties, the problems of deprivation in rural Ireland were especially exemplified in the perpetual problem of 'The West': the Borderlands represented another 'west' by virtue of their peripherality to both states, which was exacerbated for much of their area by coincidence with poorer land and farm structures with limited employment opportunities. Closure of railways and restrictions on road communications exacerbated problems of accessibility and symbolized for many residents the abandonment of the borderlands by both governments. Rail links through Clones had linked south Ulster with Belfast – its natural urban centre. At its peak Clones had 52 trains a day passing through. Locals in the borderlands thought in terms of counties rather than northern or southern Ireland; strong regional identities emphasized the 'Ulster-ness' of Cavan and Monaghan.

The topographic and landscape intricacies of the borderlands generated memories of anxiety and fear on approaching an approved crossing and facilitated smuggling as a way of life for many. Locals resented the 'absolute authority of customs staff ... more feared than the police ... these officious men in navy suits with gold braid and hats on them like Russian sailors...' (p. 53). The border was fairly permeable, however, until more and more people acquired cars by the 1960s: then the border had much more effect on a family's geography of socializing and local travel as cars had to be bonded and only approved road crossings could be used. However, during the 'Troubles' of the late 1950s, the borderlands were very porous landscapes: while the IRA used fields, ditches, mountains, rivers and bogs, only the local civilian populations were discommoded. Up until the 1970s, social activity mirrored local geographies of Catholic and Protestant populations, reflecting 'patterns of partial integration and partial segregation' (p. 63). In this ethnic mosaic many Protestant and Catholic children attended the nearest primary school. In two situations, however, strict segregation took place – separate church-going and dances ensured low levels of intermarriage.

The major outbreak of conflict after 1969 had a big impact on the borderlands as they brought into sharper focus fragile intercommunity relationships rooted in seventeenth-century settlement patterns. Complex border topographies in south Armagh and south

Fermanagh fractured what delicate integration had taken place. This was especially true for the vulnerable Protestant community in many places, resurrecting memories of 1641 and the 1690s. It became a besieged minority exposed to outbreaks of violence against the symbols of their political culture and relying on the security of the militarized frontier at their backs. The book documents commonly held assumptions that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) campaign in the borderlands was ultimately about land and its ownership – with instances of Protestant farms being burned out in Fermanagh for instance.

The field interviews illustrate the highly complex patterns of identity that prevail around and within the borderlands. Misconceptions about ‘the other’ on both sides of the community and on both sides of the border were thrown into sharp focus during the conflict. The ‘Troubles’ made the actual border crossing a matter of increased anxiety and tension with ever-present fears of something going wrong, delays at checkpoints, queues, barbed wire, cameras, soldiers and guns. There are references to the freedom felt on crossing south into a ‘land of no fear’. This reviewer remembers the silence on the train from Belfast to Dublin in the eighties, then the communal relief on crossing into Co Louth, with gins and tonics ordered from the bar and voices raised in loud conversation. As with the earlier campaign, blowing up or closing or spiking the roads ‘was only annoying the local people’; it had little or no effect on the IRA campaign of violence more generally.

After the ‘Troubles’, all was changed and it was ‘the reopening of the border roads and the closure of military checkpoints in the mid 1990s that most dramatically reconfigured the border and borderland life’ – with the thrill of travelling along older well-trodden paths and re-establishing earlier patterns of mobility and relationships. Many Protestant respondents, however, who are numerically a minority in the local and regional ethnicities in the borderlands feel more insecure now with the erosion of the border as a barrier and the perceived encroachment of the southern state.

*Partitioned lives* is an original and insightful exploration of this unique region in Ireland. It may also be a timely study when the conceptual and geographical realities of internal borders within the UK may be on the cusp of change with the impending Scottish referendum.

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