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Book Review: Contract Workers, Risk, and the War in Iraq: Sierra Leonean Labor Migrants at U.S. Military Bases. By Kevin J. A. Thomas. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. Pp. viii+243. \$110.00 (cloth); \$34.95 (paper)

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should be seen as detrimental—indeed, immoral—irrespective of how the wealthy navigate it. But I was left wondering whether the anxieties of affluence that she masterfully documents are mere by-products of economic disparity or a mechanism that produces it. Do downwardly oriented individuals have more heterogeneous social networks than their upwardly oriented counterparts, as Sherman observes, because they select into these relationships or because exposure to variety makes them more aware of their privilege? And what are the effects of the intergenerational transmission of affluence anxiety? It is here, as Sherman demonstrates, where the conflicting narratives are most pronounced: parents inculcate their children with feelings and behaviors that negate a sense of entitlement while sending them to private schools and transporting them in private jets. Does affluent children's awareness of and discomfort about their privilege ultimately lead to greater or less economic disparity?

Uneasy Street moves beyond simplistic portrayals of the rich as objects of envy or fear, depicting them as humans with desires and skills that are, in part, products of their cultural toolkits. This insightful and beautifully written book should be required reading for economic sociologists exploring the morality of money, for students of contemporary inequality, and for cultural sociologists interested in understanding how narratives mediate the relationship between values and behaviors. Its wealth of ideas will surely inspire them to rethink their own research.

Contract Workers, Risk, and the War in Iraq: Sierra Leonean Labor Migrants at U.S. Military Bases. By Kevin J. A. Thomas. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. Pp. viii+243. \$110.00 (cloth); \$34.95 (paper).

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It is quite easy to summarize the content of Kevin Thomas's book, *Contract Workers, Risk, and the War in Iraq*—at least in terms of its context, actors, and situation. The book is about the people of Sierra Leone, who, upon facing unemployment and poverty in the country's postwar society, move to war-torn Iraq, where they find employment on U.S. military bases. Whether they work as kitchen assistants, cleaners, or security guards equipped with military-grade weapons, their existence in Iraq is characterized by uncertainty and the risk of being injured or killed. Sierra Leonean workers receive extremely poor salaries compared to U.S. employees or employees other developing countries who perform the same or similar tasks.

It is more difficult to summarize Thomas's empirical data and the theories that are intended to undergird the analysis he presents. The empirical data comprise interviews with people who have returned to Sierra Leone after working in Iraq, but his use of quotes from the interviews is quite lim-

ited. The few examples Thomas offers are presented without any deeper analysis of these empirical sequences. Thomas gives an extensive list of theoretical starting points in the book, including risk theory, migration theory, neoclassical economic theory, neoliberalism, world systems, and the theory of militarism, yet these theories are scarcely applied in the analysis of the interviews with the returnees. The likely reason is that these theories all originate in a macroperspective, making it somewhat complicated to apply them to the analysis of interview data.

Clear theoretical shortcomings are evident in Thomas's book, as is an empirical lack of interest in the interactions between the book's primary actors (contract workers from Sierra Leone) and other actors who figure in the context and situations described. Research exists (e.g., Randall Collins, 2004 and 2008) that provides tools for more direct and complex ways of analyzing wars, armed violence, the postwar period, risk, migration, relationships in the workplace, unequal power relationships, discrimination, and similar topics by drawing attention to emotions, processes, methods, and types, as well as the interactive dynamic that is integrated into narrative structures. Yet Thomas does not turn to or apply these tools here.

The book presents analyses of phenomena recounted in interviews, but these phenomena are not analyzed as interactive and situational. Rather, the analyses remain at a comprehensive macrolevel, and the connection between empiricism and theory is lost again and again. The author does not focus on analyzing the relationships between the contract workers, between contract workers and employers, between contract workers and their situation, or among the contract workers, their situation, and the audience in context. This failure to center the analysis around empirical material is particularly problematic. Indeed, the "analysis" in this book can be described as accounts of contract workers, risk, and the war, but true analysis of these accounts is lacking.

Despite shortcomings in its analytical formulation, the book shows how inequality, unequal power relationships, and discrimination can develop and be shaped in a postwar society (Sierra Leone), in a war-torn society (Iraq), and internationally (multinational companies). Contract workers who come to Iraq from Sierra Leone face discrimination and are exploited as a resource. At every level, they are exploited and discriminated against by the powers that be in both Sierra Leone and the United States—from governments and multinational companies (through various signed agreements) to bottom-tier government and business representatives (through practical employment and relationships in the workplace).

Inequality, unequal power relationships, and discrimination are essential analytical discoveries that the book's analysis does capture. However, the theoretical and empirical shortcomings hamper the analysis and any attempt at better understanding the lives and experiences of contract workers in Sierra Leone and Iraq and the causes and consequences of various social events in the different contexts (at the individual, group, and societal levels). In addition, these limitations hinder our understanding of how the phenom-

ena are connected to interpersonal relationships and to the economic, cultural, and social processes that these relationships engender and in which they are rooted.

In the contexts and situations in Sierra Leone and Iraq, contract workers, employers, and other actors use and are involved in numerous different identifiers, either alternately or simultaneously. Such identifiers may include their professional identity, their gender, and their ethnic identity. These overlapping or parallel identifiers operate through a series of interactions in which an individual assigns (or is assigned to) identification categories in various ways. A greater focus on these interactions would have improved the book's analysis. Readers would have gained insight into questions about when and how inequality, unequal power relationships, and discrimination arise in connection with war, risk, migration, and work, as well as who drives their development.

This book will no doubt stimulate further sociological research in many ways. It is elegantly composed, informatively written, and carefully argued. Moreover, Thomas cautiously and courageously addresses both urgent social issues and the previous research used in the analysis. Many countries face the challenge of determining how to reasonably receive and integrate newly arrived migrants who have experienced war in their home countries. Against this background, new knowledge will be essential regarding migrants who have lived through war, taken refuge in a new country, found employment, and started working in that new country. In light of this fact, Thomas's book is an important contribution to future analyses of the organization of the work of recently arrived migrants who have experienced war. Knowledge about how to improve integration and combat discrimination remains relatively undeveloped, so these topics are crucial—both for future sociological research and for government authorities and other actors. The field will require the addition of narratives that address the combination of war experiences, migration, labor, inequality, and discrimination; the importance of the workplace in the creation of a migrant's identity; inequality and discrimination; and inequality and discrimination as a barrier to the integration of migrants and despite its shortcomings, Thomas's book contributes to these necessary additions.

The Moral Power of Money: Morality and Economy in the Life of the Poor.
By Ariel Wilkis. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2017. Pp. ix + 206.
\$29.95 (paper).

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Economic sociology has become increasingly fascinated with the question of how morality is entwined with economic life. In *The Moral Power of*