

their bodies. Necochea's work thus enriches substantially our understandings of gender, sexuality and the family in Peruvian history.

A History of Family Planning in Twentieth-Century Peru contains six thematic and roughly chronological chapters. Chapter 1 surveys physicians' and officials' ideas about eugenics in the first half of the twentieth century, arguing that such figures saw changes in reproductive behaviour, safe birthing practices, proper parenting, and the control of vices as key components of building a healthy and productive nation. Chapter 2 analyses the work and legacy of Irene Silva de Santolalla, a Peruvian senator and conservative proponent of family education, who sought to create 'well-constituted families' by training wives and mothers to embrace female domesticity and become models of responsible parenting. Breaking with the biographical approach and emphasising ordinary people's experiences, chapter 3 examines the illegal practice of abortion in Peru. Necochea uses criminal cases to reconstruct the meanings society ascribed to abortion, the myriad reasons women themselves took action to end their pregnancies and the relationship between abortion providers and others involved in family planning. Chapter 4 reconstructs the experiences of health workers who embraced family planning and gradually came to support access to birth control by mid-century, resulting in the development of a provider-led model of family planning services by the 1960s that reinforced experts' power while failing to seek input from the women they assisted. Finally, Chapters 5 and 6 analyse the roles of civilian and military governments and the Catholic Church in developing and promoting family planning. Necochea argues that while governments focused on smaller families as the key to furthering socio-economic development and sought to mediate the influence of international agencies, the Church assumed the position in the 1960s that contraception did not contradict religious teachings if it was used to space births properly and thereby create better constituted, more stable family units.

Although Necochea's intervention in demographic transition theory merits the attention it receives in the book's introduction, some readers may wish he had more deliberately highlighted other contributions the book makes. In particular, Necochea's analysis significantly enhances our understanding of public health and the work of medical professionals under the Odría and Velasco dictatorships, as well as the civilian governments that ruled at mid-century. Its contributions to understandings of gender, sexuality, race and class in Peruvian society are likewise noteworthy. Finally, some readers may also wish that Necochea had discussed in greater depth in the book's epilogue the cases of coerced and forced sterilisations in the 1990s that framed the introduction, as this would add to the political import of his analysis and its relevance for recent Peruvian history. None of these concerns, however, diminishes the importance of this beautifully researched and engaging contribution to Peruvian history, the history of medicine and the history of family planning.

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David William Foster, *Argentine, Mexican, and Guatemalan Photography: Feminist, Queer, and Post-masculinist Perspectives* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014), pp. xviii + 197, £42.00, hb.

The author of this work ought to be embarrassed by it. Cobbling together essays, reviews and notes did not make a book, especially one the bloated title of which

attempts to appeal to every librarian and teacher needing to fill the information void created by the 'visual turn'. Foster's ignorance of Latin American photography is demonstrated in the preface, where he affirms that 'the earliest photographic images we now have of Latin American women are those of prostitutes', made in Mexico around 1900 (p. xiv). He is unaware that daguerrotypes of women throughout Latin America can be dated from the 1840s, as can ambrotypes from the 1850s, and *tarjetas de visita* in the following decades; he is also unacquainted with the well-known photographic registers of Mexican prostitutes made during the French intervention of 1861–67. In that same preface he refers to 'Dolores Bravo Álvarez' (p. x), who is in fact Lola Álvarez Bravo, information that is available in the books published about her, or with a quick glance online. Foster's negligent edition of his previously-published essays is seen in instances such as the oft-reiterated phrase that Mexican men are expected to be 'feo, fuerte y formal' (pp. 84, 101, 131), as well as in repetitious discussions of Argentine photographers.

It appears that Foster knows very little about Mexican photography, and has apparently made few efforts to acquaint himself with the basic bibliography. This is displayed in the third chapter, 'Woman, prostitution, and modernity in fin-de-siècle Mexico', which focuses on the book, *La casa de citas*, a work made up of photographs of prostitutes c. 1900. There, he attempts to shoehorn these images into Modernism; his background in literary studies left him unaware that photographic Modernism in Mexico does not begin until the 1920s. It appears that he did not read the introduction to the work on which he bases this chapter, because he refers to the author, Ava Vargas, as 'she', despite the fact that Vargas writes, '*Estoy seguro*' (p. xix). Other chapters demonstrate an unfamiliarity with Mexico. To say that 'there is virtually no censorship in Mexico' (p. 64) is not only inaccurate, but irresponsible. Mexican censorship is ubiquitous in widespread bribery, the firing of critical journalists such as Carmen Aristegui and assassinations. Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists: 67 have been killed since 2006, and many have been disappeared, because their deaths and kidnappings are rarely investigated. In fact, government censorship is so rife that the website of the Committee to Protect Journalists is blocked to internet access from Mexico. In addition, Foster asserts that 'long sleeves [are] demanded by traditional Mexican machismo' (p. 102), a falsehood of which he would be disabused by driving a couple of hours south of his university.

Given that he has published two books on Argentine photography, I expected Foster to be somewhat more knowledgeable about it than Mexican imagery. Unfortunately, he is unfamiliar with essential studies; for example, a brief internet search encounters the 1854 daguerrotype of the famous Argentine intellectual María Sánchez de Thompson. This well-known image flies in the face of Foster's assertion that women begin to be photographed in 1900. The same ignorance can be seen in his chapters based on the viewing of a 1999 exhibit held at the International Center of Photography in New York City (p. viii). He asserts that Gisèle Freund 'served virtually as the official court photographer of the First Lady [Eva Perón]' (p. 19). Nothing could be further from the truth. A Magnum member, Freund was in Argentina working freelance, and took some photos in which Evita displayed her gowns and jewels. The Argentine government felt that such pictures were discordant with the image projected by the *descamisados*'s saint, and asked Freund to surrender the negatives. She was able to escape, and the photos caused a scandal when they were published in *Life*. There is much repetition:

for example, the chapter on Annemarie Heinrich repeats information about Grete Stern from the immediately preceding chapter.

The major cultural shift towards the ‘visual turn’ found academia poorly prepared to respond to the demands of hypervisuality, and universities have experienced difficulty in locating faculty who are able to explore their interest in modern (technical) media within the rigours of their disciplines. Scholars have attempted to bridge the gap between what they were trained to do, and what is now in demand. Literary specialists have enthusiastically entered into the challenge; an informal glance at my own bookshelves reveals that around half of the English-language books on photography were written by scholars who are members of language and literature departments, or were trained in that specialisation. Though some literary scholars have done top-flight photographic research, too many of their publications are over-theorised and under-investigated. Moreover, some of them lack a basic acquaintance with (or perhaps interest in) photographs: for example, Foster’s unfamiliarity with the ocular made it impossible for him to recognise that Marcos López’s photo, *Tomando sol en la terraza* (2005, p. 124), is a direct restaging of Manuel Álvarez Bravo’s widely-known image, *La buena fama durmiendo* (1939).

At times, literary scholars seem to simply beat the images into shapes that serve their purposes; photographs become illustrations for theoretical posturing rather than objects of investigation. Foster’s variation is to focus on the academic ‘flavours of the month’, forcing all the photographers into demonstrations of ‘*Feminist, Queer, and Post-masculinist Perspectives*’. Thankfully, Foster avoids postmodern jargon, but he provides almost no knowledge of use to photographic historians. In sum, the evidence of this book would indicate that David William Foster knows little about Latin American photography.

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Jorge García-Robles, *At the End of the Road: Jack Kerouac in Mexico* (Minneapolis, MN, and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), pp. xi + 130, \$17.95, pb.

The climax of Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* is the visit to Mexico very near to the end, with its author’s thinly-veiled stand-in living out a kind of fantasy. ‘Behind us lay the whole of America’, he writes, ‘and everything Dean and I had previously known about life, and life on the road. We had finally found the magic land at the end of the road and we never dreamed the extent of the magic’ (*On the Road*, p. 276). The magic consists of cheap drugs and prostitutes, and a spiritual space that he sees as existing in opposition to American materialism. *On the Road* went unpublished for five years before it made him famous, and into the Beat icon that he hated to be. In the meantime, he returned to Mexico repeatedly, and usually loved it, or at least his idea of it.

Jorge García-Robles is an expert on the Beats in Mexico; the author of a duology on Burroughs’ and Kerouac’s relationships to the country. The Burroughs half was published in translation in 2013 as *The Stray Bullet: William S. Burroughs in Mexico*, and this is the second half, on Kerouac, originally published in Spanish in 2000. Both volumes have had the same translator, Daniel Schechter, and both are erudite and elegant literary essays, monographs that resemble novellas, and have been rendered by Schechter in casual and readable prose that feels appropriate to their subject.