

Research and Development (AAWAD), one of the most important organizations to emerge during the U.N. Decade on Women, helped institutionalize greater dialogue among women in the Global South and transform the discussion about development. Transnational dialogue has been a longstanding feature of African intellectual and political life, but transnationalism has become increasingly important to the economic well-being of African families and communities. Therefore, the recent growth of African diasporic communities in Asia, Europe, and North America deserves further discussion.

Finally, Berger demonstrates that we can write general histories that do not flatten the human experience. New ways of thinking about love, fashion, and sexuality shaped the twentieth century for African women as much as markets, states, and wars did. She has provided a rich synthesis of data drawn from old and new classics as well as examples from East, West, central, and southern Africa. Thus students at all levels will find this text invaluable.

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ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

Charles Piot, ed. *Doing Development in West Africa: A Reader by and for Undergraduates*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016. x + 222 pp. Photographs. Index. \$23.95. Paper. ISBN: 978-780822361923.

Doing Development in West Africa is an edited collection of essays written by undergraduate students at Duke University and intended for an audience of undergraduate students. The editor of this anthology is the well-known senior anthropologist Charles Piot, who has conducted research in northern Togo for more than twenty-five years and has generously opened up his research site and vast networks and connections in the region to a small group of undergraduate students each summer since 2008. The students design and work on “do-it-yourself” (DIY) low-cost development projects with the support of university funds, especially from Duke’s Global Health Institute and a service-learning program called DukeEngage. The book provides valuable lessons for students interested in summer service projects in the Global South.

Following a short introductory chapter about the Duke summer program and the region where it is located, Piot removes himself from the volume until the end, when he returns with a short epilogue. The rest of the book, ten chapters in total, was written by students. Part 1, “Personal Reflections,” consists of narratives by six students reflecting on their

experiences in Togo and covering topics from culture and geographic shock—"I was in an entirely different world (19)"—to misplaced stereotypes of Africa and the ways in which "failure can be instructive (10)." In fact, despite the good intentions and hard work, failure was the outcome for some projects and students were taught to expect minimal success. The students are refreshingly honest about their project's shortcomings and how "messy" the world of development practice and intervention is, probably because they are not dependent on "success" for continued employment and project funding. They therefore speak willingly of deficiencies in the development process that an NGO employee or other development worker would be reluctant to confess.

The second part of the volume, titled "Research Articles," includes nine chapters on a range of studies and projects written by individual students. Most cover an applied research activity that addresses a real world problem. It is unsurprising that many of the chapters are concerned with human health, since global health studies is widely popular on many U.S. campuses. Thus, five of the ten chapters deal with different aspects of health, including "Biomedicine and Traditional Healing" (chapter 3) and "Rural Medicine in an Urban Setting" (chapter 4). One particularly interesting chapter (chapter 5) covers a village health insurance scheme whose initial successes were not sustained. Questioning why this was so, the author found that although the annual subscription fee was minimal (\$3.60 per family per year), the timing of the fee collection, the availability of essentially free treatment from traditional healers, and poor understanding of annual medical costs kept local participation low. However, the number of insurers tripled once a student visited homesteads to explain the level of cash savings that could be attained through insurance; the personal touch proved to be an important factor. Other innovative chapters cover a micro-finance program for youth (chapter 9), a computer training initiative (chapter 8), and youth migration (chapter 6). In these and other chapters, the importance of youth and the challenges they present for health, education, and employment are highlighted. As youths themselves, the student authors are perhaps better positioned to understand the situation of their Togolese peers than their teachers are.

Doing Development in West Africa will be a valuable book for courses in international development, African studies, and development anthropology, and provides good "hands-on" guidance for students preparing for summer projects in Africa, Asia, or Latin America. While written for undergraduates, the book also provides important lessons for development practitioners who often fail to appreciate the importance of local context, history, and knowledge systems, and then wonder why their development efforts go awry.

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