

Andrew Faull, *Police Work and Identity: a South African ethnography*. Abingdon: Routledge (hb £115 – 978 1 138 23329 4). 2018, xxix + 200 pp.

Andrew Faull's desire to join the South African Police Service (SAPS) was thwarted when the adults in his life encouraged him to get an 'education' instead. In his monograph, based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork, he observes that he ended up as an 'accidental academic' researching the lives of 'accidental' police officers in South Africa – those who simply wanted a job and SAPS offered them one. Few officers indicated that they joined SAPS for idealistic reasons of fighting crime and making South Africa better. Faull's ethnography of state policing in South Africa goes beyond the focus on 'cop culture' to show that police actions are also influenced by their personal histories, ambitions and vulnerabilities. The book explores officers' perceptions of themselves through an exploration of their quotidian experiences in a context marked by poverty and violence. Faull examines how the officers construct and sustain a personal image of the self through their decisions to join SAPS, their experience of the job and their hopes for their future and their children's futures. He highlights the impact of racial identity on the careers of police officers, including the different kinds of moonlighting opportunities available to them. The analysis is also informed by close attention to the continuities and discontinuities between four locations, showing that affluent spaces are protected and left to self-govern while poorer spaces are regulated and their residents disciplined. The gaze of the state is directed towards *skollies*: young men believed to be criminals. Faull shows that police officers are agentic actors but also that their agency is not unconstrained; they are also products of their context.

Faull's analysis contains two valuable observations. First, a sense of danger is predominant in the officers' view of themselves and their jobs. This explains why they are reluctant to wear seatbelts just in case they need to jump out of the car during an attack. Importantly, the officers are unable to escape such threats because the tools of their trade – uniform, firearms – attract the attention of their antagonists. When they are off duty, officers do not disclose their occupation. Second, Faull shows how SAPS is heavily invested in the production of fiction to justify its existence and give legitimacy to its actions. He explores four types of deception that SAPS engages in: *public performance deceptions*, such as setting up roadblocks during festive seasons to create an appearance of reducing road accidents; *data performance deception*, such as incorrectly recording the presence of minors in shebeens during inspections; *internal deceptions*, such as officers calling in sick to use their sick allowance; and *external deceptions*, such as claiming that they could not open an attempted rape case because the mother of the young victim had been drinking, leading to a *culture of suspicion* with SAPS officers disbelieving reports of street robbery.

Faull's foregrounding of the often unheard voices of rank-and-file officers is to be lauded, although his omission of other voices exposes gaps in his analysis. For instance, his failure to include the opinion of the SAPS leadership on institutionally sanctioned fraud means that he is unable to engage with the discourses through which such practices are legitimated. Similarly, he does not bring the voices of the officer 'dependants' to bear on his analysis. As a result, he assigns more agency to the police officers than he apportions himself. While he acknowledges that his decision not to join SAPS was influenced by other people in his life and notes that many of the officers did not want their children joining the police, he does not explore how family members influenced his interlocutors' decisions. Such explorations would have enriched this ethnography.

Faull fails to fully explore how the quest for police accountability by citizens affects the ontological security of police officers. He shows attempts by police officers to avoid accountability by only engaging in violence when they cannot be identified or by presenting false testimonies in the Marikana inquiry. Unsurprisingly, therefore, most of the investigations by the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) into allegations of police misconduct are closed as 'unsubstantiated'. He also notes that some officers have considered leaving SAPS, since citizens can now demand accountability and they are uncertain of protection from their superiors. In the few cases that go beyond the investigation, disciplinary action can result in suspension, dismissal or incarceration. The gem here – which Faull overlooks by focusing on the avoidance of accountability – is the impact of such potential consequences on officers' perceptions of themselves and their place in SAPS.

Although the last few years have seen a growth in academic interest in the topic, our understanding of the state police in many African regions remains limited. By examining the state police from the perspective of the officers, Faull's ethnography offers a refreshing contribution to the literature on policing in South Africa and beyond. This makes it a critical text for those studying policing or street-level bureaucrats in South Africa, with important comparative reach to other parts of the continent.

Kamau Wairuri

Centre for African Studies, University of Edinburgh

[kamau.wairuri@ed.ac.uk](mailto:kamau.wairuri@ed.ac.uk)

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Ravindra Kumar Vemula and SubbaRao M. Gavaravarapu (editors), *Health Communication in the Changing Media Landscape: perspectives from developing countries*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan (hb £99.99 – 978 3 319 33538 4; pb £69.99 – 978 3 319 81540 4). 2016, 238 pp.

This edited volume emerged from the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conference of 2014. In the introduction, the editors detail some commonalities across the developing world regarding health and communication. Four themed parts follow, consisting of eleven stand-alone studies that are rounded off with a short conclusion. On a general level, the volume is enjoyable and valuable as it covers a multitude of issues and encompasses a diverse range of developing countries, including Papua New Guinea, India and Russia. As all the authors live in or originate from their subject countries, they are able to identify challenges to health communication and new media that are often overlooked by people with less first-hand experience.

The themes covered are: 'Health communication: discourses from tradition to modernity', 'Health communication in the changing media landscape', 'Framing of health in media' and 'Emerging issues'. These divisions, however, seem to have been applied as an afterthought as individual studies do not directly address the themes in question. This makes it difficult to draw thematic conclusions. The majority of the studies rely on desktop research, some of which draws on textual analysis or case studies to support the argument. Only a few authors directly refer to their fieldwork. Most chapters focus on health communication and media at the country level, with a few discussing specific community-level studies.

At the country level, Carolina Acosta-Alzuru focuses on Venezuela, using textual analysis to discuss how former President Hugo Chávez's illness and