

whole volume. However, the chapter titled “Identity Issues” deals only with those who were categorized as coloureds and is underpinned by a disturbing contradiction: “coloureds” are treated as a uniform group whose members have partaken in the desirability of a world “characterized by Euro-American culture and norms” (164); teenagers, for instance, are described as exclusively interested in U.S. musical styles. While this fascination does represent one aspect of youth coloured culture (and adult as well), it by no means excludes an active interest in creole forms that developed from the second half of the nineteenth century—*Klopse* Carnival, *Singhore* (“Malay Choirs”) competitions, Christmas Choir competitions, *langarm* dance parties, to name but a few. People who participate in these practices belong mostly to the working class and the lower middle class; it seems that Besteman’s coloured interlocutors were drawn from the educated elite who tended to scorn such plebeian cultural forms (although their discourse has significantly changed in more recent times).

This illustrates how much she depended, as all anthropologists do, on her interactions with a limited set of interlocutors, a problem that links up with questions she poses in chapters 4 and 6, where she discusses dilemmas she faced in the course of her research: how could she situate herself, as a white American, within the politics of racial identity? How could she listen with empathy to privileged whites’ discourses (106) and render their racist opinions when they have been so nice to her? How to reciprocate when people have gone out of their way to make her work possible? Besteman offers no definite answer, but invites the reader to seriously consider these questions by looking at the manner in which she (re)discovers them, which is probably more useful. She nevertheless draws two lessons: anthropological research must not only focus on “communities” but also interrogate the idea of community by concentrating on processes; beyond patterns and structures, the anthropologist must take into account individual experiences and the “unpredictable peculiarities” of their circumstances. All this is not, of course, new, but it is made more sensible because Catherine Besteman allows the reader to watch how her conclusions grew from her fieldwork.

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**Brad Weiss. *Street Dreams and Hip Hop Barbershops: Global Fantasy in Urban Tanzania*.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. xii + 263 pp. Appendix. Photographs. Notes. References. Index. \$65.00. Cloth. \$24.95. Paper.

*Street Dreams* is an ethnography about the struggles, fantasies, and aspirations of youth in the informal economy of Arusha (Tanzania). Although the

title focuses on one subject of the book (barbershops), Weiss looks at many areas of popular culture in order to attain an awareness of the interconnect- edness of peoples and places, as well as the “self-fashioning” that occurs in neoliberal value production (24). The term *value* refers to a “capacity for consumption” and the way consumerism generates modes of production through knowledge of different styles and ideas. For instance, cheap Indo- nesian cloth made into a dress does not hold much value until a fake Gloria Vanderbilt label—a symbol of international power and prestige—is sewn into the dress. Weiss argues that Tanzanian youth become driven by values of the wider world even as they feel “incapable of realizing” those values in their lives. This dynamic of being both included and excluded in value production shapes the popular cultural practices in Arusha today.

For most of the ethnography, Weiss focuses on young men and their styles, attitudes, and interactions with one another. The chapters that exam- ine the staff and customers of barbershops (generally, chapters 2–4) are some of the most insightful in this regard, since they provide firsthand accounts of the struggles that youth encounter in a neoliberal economy. In chapter 2, for instance, Weiss analyzes the notion of invincibility among Tanzanian young men. Despite the hardships that youth encounter in their daily lives, they develop a toughness that allows them to confront, and in many ways transgress, their economic and political marginalization. Weiss discusses this invincibility through examining elements of barbers’ lives, such as their practice of hanging posters of African Americans inside the barbershop. In addition, Weiss relates this display of invincibility to other areas of daily life in Arusha: public buses, for instance, are frequently embla- zoned with names of controversial figures, such as Sani Abacha, the notori- ous former military ruler of Nigeria. Bus drivers use the signs to defy the power that the name evokes. As one of Weiss’s informants told him, “Young people do not love Sani Abacha, but they know no one can ‘force’ him to do what they want” (51). In turn, the person who places that name on his bus or posts a picture of a tough American rapper in a barbershop is also conjuring up the idea of invincibility. “Invincibility” is examined again in chapter 4, where Weiss moves the discussion to other areas, including weak- ness and pain—the weakness and pain which youth endure and overcome in their daily lives.

Subsequent chapters in *Street Dreams* examine other aspects of popular culture and the informal economy in Tanzania. As a symbolic anthropolo- gist, Weiss looks closely at the meaning of things, such as male hairstyles, including controversial ones such as bald heads and dreadlocks (discussed in chapter 3); the meaning and modification of clothes (chapter 5); the popularity of certain television shows, such as American soap operas (chap- ter 6); and the lyrics to songs by local rap groups (chapter 7). In all of these chapters, there is a richness of theoretical analysis that helps the reader comprehend the harsh realities that youth encounter without making them appear either too despondent or too creative.

While some may find the theoretical sections of Weiss's chapters too dense, others will regard *Street Dreams* as an important ethnography for interpreting the intersection of youth, masculinity, and popular culture. He draws particularly on the concept of fantasy as valuable for exploring the way that young people deal with the possibilities presented by the importation of foreign popular culture and the limitations of economic circumstances of urban Tanzania, noting that fantasy should be understood as "evidence of the many ways that Arusha's young men have found to inhabit the processes of their own displacement, to live through rupture, not simply react to it" (94). In this way, *Street Dreams* provides a useful means to understand globalization and neoliberalism, particularly as it affects young men in Africa's informal economies.

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