

formal work sector. The situations described in these chapters can be considered “food deserts,” and research has revealed that those who live in food deserts overwhelmingly tend to be people of color and low-income individuals. Unfortunately, the chapters fail to address whether and how race, class, or immigration (status) have played a role in creating both a need for these informal activities and the space and labor necessary for them to take place.

Overall, this book is in many ways a one-stop shop for those interested in understanding some of the complexities involved in America’s informal urban landscape. In a country where regulation and organization are thought to be the cornerstones of political, economic, and social life, *The Informal American City* serves as a strong reminder that a growing number of citizens depend on having the ability to operate outside of these boundaries. Ultimately, the volume achieves what it sets out to do, which is to provide an exposé of informal urbanism and to offer insightful and grounded policy recommendations that could be of use to urban planners, policy makers, and other interested parties with the power to influence the future direction of informal urbanism. The inclusion of such a diverse range of topics makes this text qualitatively and theoretically interdisciplinary, and it could easily become a “go-to” text for students and scholars of urbanism and urban planning.

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*The United States of Excess: Gluttony and the Dark Side of American Exceptionalism*, by **Robert Paarlberg**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 248 pp. \$21.95 cloth. ISBN: 9780199922628.

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That American culture is prone to excess is obvious to anyone who has ever visited a mall during the Christmas season, observed move-in day on a college campus, or had the pleasure of dining at an all-you-can-eat buffet. With a wide range of potential ways of observing excess in American culture, Robert Paarlberg in *The United States of*

*Excess* opts to focus on our extreme consumption of fossil fuels and food. According to Paarlberg, the United States’ excessive consumption of fuel and food stems from three sources: a) the country’s abundant material endowments, b) its political institutions with multiple checks on any major policy initiative, and c) a uniquely diverse and individualist culture. These characteristics have prevented the United States from adopting stronger policies to address obesity and carbon emissions. As the effects of global climate disruption mount, these same traits of the United States’ political culture will likely lead us down a path of adaptation rather than mitigation, as other parts of the world bear the worst burdens.

The book focuses on food and fuel and, consequently, obesity and carbon emissions, which Paarlberg argues are quite different from other forms of excess. For him, food and fossil fuels stand apart from other purchases because they are literally consumptive, while buying clothes, furniture, and so on is mere “acquisition.” As he writes, “Asking Americans to consume less should be easier than asking them to ‘own less,’ because excess consumption of food and fuel is both harmful and less critical to social status” (p. 14).

In fact, food and fuel are profoundly linked to social status. The big houses with professional-quality stainless steel appliances and technological toys plugged into every socket that suburbanites lust after are CO<sup>2</sup> monsters. A high-status luxury vehicle burns through fossil fuels at a higher rate than a low-cost two-door car. The mere existence of Chef Hubert Keller’s \$5,000 burger reveals that Americans’ desire for rich, decadent foods is as much about status as any piece of jewelry. Like any other acquired goods, food and fossil fuels are embedded in cultures and sets of social meanings that are inadequately conceptualized in *The United States of Excess*.

More importantly, the cultures around food and fossil fuel consumption are very different from each other. Rarely do people post Instagram photos from the gas station, while we do have multiple food channels, celebrity chefs, and a social media phenomenon known as “food porn.” Likewise, though many people may want to lower their energy

bill, there's simply no equivalent to the over \$60 billion weight loss industry. The processes that lead to excessive food consumption are different from the ones that produce our immense CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. Thus, the analogy between food and fuel carried throughout the book doesn't quite work, and the analysis of excessive food consumption ends up feeling tacked on to a sophisticated analysis of fossil fuel policy and consumption.

Despite this limitation, Paarlberg convincingly diagnoses the problem of excess, presenting an enormous amount of data demonstrating the growth in consumption of calories and fuel over time and compared with the rest of the world. For more than two decades, U.S. CO<sup>2</sup> emissions per capita have been double Europe's rate. Even the United States' reductions in emissions since 2006 relative to Europe are primarily due to increased hydro-fracking (which has its own environmental consequences) and have only slightly reduced the consumption gap between the continents. Similarly, Paarlberg shows the U.S. obesity rate grew from 14 percent in 1972 to 34 percent in 2012, far surpassing both the rate of growth and absolute levels of nearly all developed nations. The evidence is overwhelming that, even with some modest recent reductions in fuel consumption and caloric intake, the level of consumption in the United States is excessive compared to almost any other time or place.

Why is the United States uniquely excessive? Paarlberg points to a number of important factors including the country's abundant supply of oil, low trade restrictions on food imports, and patterns of low residential density that favor cars over walking or public transportation as well as issues of class and racial inequality that produce poverty unknown in similarly wealthy nations. All of these factors are given a brief treatment, but *The United States of Excess* is strongest in analyzing the role of American political institutions.

While other wealthy nations have committed to significant reductions in carbon emissions, levied major taxes on gas and sugary beverages, and restricted food advertising to children, the United States actively subsidizes cheap fuel and food. With its system of multiple branches of government and

veto power within each branch, almost any major policy action can be blocked fairly easily by highly interested constituencies (in this case, major food and oil corporations and their trade associations). Presidents Clinton and Obama both failed in passing moderate emission reduction policies (a BTU tax and a cap-and-trade system, respectively) because the oil and gas industries were able to exploit "veto points" in Congress and mobilize the American public's general opposition to taxation.

By contrast, the German state has consistently negotiated with oil and gas industry associations to secure regular carbon emission pledges of 20 percent or more compared to a 1990 base line. Between 1990 and 2005, U.S. CO<sup>2</sup> emissions increased by 16 percent and German emissions decreased by 16 percent. According to Paarlberg, part of the difference is due to a smaller German oil and gas industry with relatively less political sway. But with a parliamentary system where the chief executive is elected by the party members rather than in a separate election, the executive and the legislature are more cooperative and rarely veto each other. Moreover, with a multi-party rather than a two-party system, coalition governments are common, making negotiation and cooperation essential. In other words, the lack of divided government with multiple veto points makes rapid and significant government action far more likely.

Without a political system capable of taking ambitious—or even modest—mitigation measures, Paarlberg predicts that the United States will pursue adaptation policy even as the chickens of global climate disruption and the "obesity crisis" come home to roost. Rather than a carbon tax, we should expect more spending in the wake of extreme weather events, such as the construction of elevated roadways in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. More likely than soda taxes or mandating healthy school lunches, future government spending will go to weight-loss drugs and gastric bypass surgeries. Adaptation, not mitigation. Treatment, not prevention.

*The United States of Excess* is at its best in conceptualizing how oil-rich, anti-government, politically decentralized America has and will likely continue to be a massive consumer of fossil fuels despite

dire consequences. Its analysis of caloric consumption, on the other hand, lacks a sociological analysis of the culture of food.

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*Misbehaving Science: Controversy and the Development of Behavior Genetics*, by **Aaron Panofsky**. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014. 320 pp. \$27.50 paper. ISBN: 9780226058450.

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Many readers will look at this book as a story of the development of behavior genetics; but beyond this history, what Aaron Panofsky's volume offers is a way of thinking about the structure of scientific fields and the relationship between field structure and scientific controversy. Central to Panofsky's approach is the idea of *misbehaving science*. In most scientific fields, controversy is sporadic and the norms of scientific practice and what counts as legitimate knowledge are widely accepted and internalized by those in the field. Misbehaving science, by contrast, describes a field state in which controversy is "persistent and ungovernable" (p. 9). Reflecting a situation of partial anomie, here, "scientific norms and standards are ambiguous, underdeveloped, or inappropriate to the situation" (p. 9). Behavior genetics is the quintessential case of misbehaving science.

Following Pierre Bourdieu, Panofsky takes a field theoretic approach to science. He argues that "Fields are the result of a set of struggles over boundaries and definitions rather than the unfolding of a unified idea" (p. 20), and thus controversies are not just about truth claims, but more fundamentally about the structure of the field. In behavior genetics, perpetual controversy produces a structure akin to an island archipelago.

Each empirical chapter in *Misbehaving Science* explores a different controversy in the history of behavior genetics and analyzes the relationship between the dispute and the structure of the field. Panofsky's story begins in the 1950s with early efforts to develop a field focused on the genetics of behavior. Those involved recognized an image challenge from the outset. Any

research seeking to capture links between genes and behavior would need to navigate around the history of eugenics and racist claims built on behavior genetics research. The field's early leaders explicitly challenged eugenic or race-comparison research on evolutionary, methodological, and empirical grounds, and they outlined a "heterogeneous and interdisciplinary agenda" (p. 50). An important implication of the field's architects' efforts to avoid having behavior genetics branded racist was a research focus "removed from applied topics that were most amenable to politicization" (p. 67).

If early proponents of the new field promoted openness and heterogeneity, avoiding charges of politically retrograde science, the release of Arthur Jensen's work asserting a genetic basis for intellectual differences between blacks and whites upset the relative calm in the field. In his second empirical chapter, Panofsky shows how, in the late 1960s, despite prior worries about the field being branded racist, behavior geneticists rallied around Jensen's work because they saw doing so as crucial to their capacity to define their own field. This strategy had structural consequences for the field: troubled by the politics, geneticists fled the field, and the field became deeply enmeshed in the nature-nurture debate leaders had sought to avoid.

The Jensen controversy left the field fractured and defensive. In this context, a struggle emerged between those who thought animal models were the best way to understand the link between genes and behavior in people and those who believed that to understand the genetics of human behavior researchers needed to work directly with humans. Animal researchers advocated a transdisciplinary space where the relationships between genes and behavior could be studied from many different perspectives; but a number of developments, including the existing fragmentation of the field and its abandonment by geneticists and neuroscientists, isolated animal researchers, weakening their capacity to shape the field and leaving human researchers dominant.

After tracing the rise of animal researchers in behavior genetics, Panofsky turns his attention to controversy in the field from the late 1980s to the late 1990s between