



The collection could also serve as a worthy text, though the extremely high price may argue against that. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. With reservations. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.—*G. H. Shriver, Georgia Southern University, Retired*

## SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

**CC** 53-5289 BF1584 CIP  
Baxstrom, Richard. **Realizing the witch: science, cinema, and the mastery of the invisible**, by Richard Baxstrom and Todd Meyers. Fordham, 2015. 285p bibl index ISBN 9780823268245 cloth, \$95.00; ISBN 9780823268252 pbk, \$29.95; ISBN 9780823268283 ebook, contact publisher for price

This ambitious work by Baxstrom (social anthropology, Univ. of Edinburgh) and Meyers (medical anthropology, Wayne State Univ.) delivers a unique perspective on the 1922 Danish film *Häxan*. Originally conceived as a lecture in film on witchcraft, *Häxan* became much more, linking witchcraft to hysteria. The authors vigorously analyze the film, its social impact, and the historical source materials on which it was based. They present *Häxan* as an anthropological as well as a cinematic object, and rely on film history, cinematic techniques, cultural history, and anthropological theory to draw readers into the film and understand the subtle structure underneath. The book virtually shadows the film, moving from scene to scene in order to illuminate the impact the witch as a subject has on the screen and beyond. The book successfully appeals to those interested in witchcraft, film history, and anthropology. The authors' insightful writing successfully transcends *Häxan* the film and presents much more, giving new life and understanding to this underappreciated masterpiece. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*A. E. Leykam, College of Staten Island (CUNY)*

53-5290 GV1108 2015-25468 CIP  
Beilin, Katarzyna Olga. **In search of an alternative biopolitics: anti-bullfighting, animality, and the environment in contemporary Spain**. Ohio State, 2015. 305p bibl index afp ISBN 9780814212905 cloth, \$83.95

This powerful, exhilarating, sprawling, polemical book challenges bullfighting as a constructed emblem of Spanish society from the perspective of biopolitics. Beilin (Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison) brings philosophical debates full tilt into literary and cultural fields as she challenges past assumptions, develops contemporary trends, and moves into wider constructions of humanity and ecology. Beilin's cultural studies approach is deeply based in modern literature and film, though criteria for selecting case studies are not always clear, especially as the field of discussion becomes more diffuse. The first chapters deconstruct the symbolic and political meanings of tauromachy, relying on critics to reveal both strengths and weaknesses; continuing examples link authors, famous and obscure, with ongoing debates about what is human and what is animal-nonhuman. Later chapters deal with questions of human meanings and futures, biogenetics, and political discourses across Spanish nationalities. This exciting text presumes (and leaps through) significant knowledge of Spanish culture. Its core arguments and wider implications will certainly incite debate, and the book deserves careful reading and

reflection by Hispanists and citizens of the Spanish state. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*G. W. McDonogh, Bryn Mawr College*

53-5291 HQ1073 2015-940143 MARC  
Davies, Douglas J. **Mors Britannica: lifestyle and death-style in Britain today**. Oxford, 2015. 428p bibl index ISBN 9780199644971 cloth, \$50.00; ISBN 9780191815737 ebook, contact publisher for price

Davies (theology and religion, Durham Univ., UK) has written a rich and detailed sociocultural analysis of death and dying in contemporary Britain. He develops a provocative new concept—"death-styles"—and explores whether the ways that people conceptualize, approach, and respond practically, emotionally, and spiritually to death mirror their lifestyles. Weaving together meticulous historical analysis with thoughtful examples from culture, medicine, and theology, Davies pays careful attention to subgroup differences in how people die and view death. He also identifies two overarching forces that he views as playing a critical role in British death-styles: the Church of England and the National Health Service. The introductory chapter presents the theories that frame his analysis. The chapters that follow delve deeply into fascinating, far-ranging aspects of death, including memorials, body disposal, secular death rites, spirituality, personal grief, public grieving, deaths in the military and sports, and beliefs about "good death." This serious academic treatment of death, drawing on theology, philosophy, and social theory, is not an easy read, yet those with a strong interest in contemporary British history will appreciate this comprehensive work. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Graduate students and up.—*D. S. Carr, Rutgers University*

**CC** 53-5292 HM621 CIP  
Highmore, Ben. **Culture**. Routledge, 2016. 165p bibl index afp ISBN 9780415672733 cloth, \$120.00; ISBN 9780415672740 pbk, \$39.95; ISBN 9780203129470 ebook, contact publisher for price

To write about culture is inevitably self-referential and ultimately unsatisfying. Only from within a particular culture is "culture" itself first grasped, and it is always on the basis of and by reference to objects regarded as cultural or symbolic that a concept of culture can be articulated. The idea of culture, in other words, is subject to an understanding that is always and already culture dependent and therefore no less a cultural product than others giving the idea its tangible expressions. Highmore (cultural studies, Univ. of Sussex, UK) addresses the topic of culture in full recognition of the hermeneutical complication inherent in the task. Instead of trying to *define* culture, the author moves diagonally to his theme by considering a cluster of topics by which the multiple meanings of culture are shown to resonate in palpable harmony. Discussing in turn notions such as politics, experience, death, and landscape, Highmore demonstrates how culture is continually formed, deformed, and reformed and how this formation produces the very concept of culture. Peppered with refreshing examples and case studies, the book provides a lively introduction to the important topic of culture that anyone interested in cultural analysis will find useful. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. All levels/libraries.—*B. G. Chang, University of Massachusetts*

53-5293 HV2380 2015-26307 CIP  
**It's a small world: international deaf spaces and encounters**, ed. by Michele Friedner and Annelies Kusters. Gallaudet, 2015. 306p bibl index afp ISBN 9781563686528 cloth, \$70.00; ISBN 9781563686535 ebook, \$70.00

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