

passing. If legal passing is a coping strategy designed to distance undocumented migrants from a racialized and marginalized social category, then the harms are a result of racist and discriminatory immigration laws, and *not* the strategies that individuals enact to survive living in a racist society. In this way, *Legal Passing* reflects the tendency of canonical studies of assimilation to overlook the enduring significance of racism and racialization on the adaptation of immigrants and their descendants.

These limits notwithstanding, *Legal Passing* is a real achievement and an outstanding contribution to law and society scholarship. As a study of legal consciousness, the book reveals how migrants perform legality through quotidian and embodied practices. It elucidates the uneven costs that “illegality” imposes across different geographies, demonstrating how space and place shape the effects of immigration laws, and how immigration laws also shape space and place. Eminently readable, *Legal Passing* will engage undergraduate and graduate students, as well as an interdisciplinary community of socio-legal scholars.

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Ownership, Narrative, Things. By David Cowan, Helen Carr, and Alison Wallace. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018

Manufactured Insecurity: Mobile Home Parks and Americans' Tenuous Right to Place. Esther Sullivan. Oakland: University of California Press, 2018

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The lack of affordable housing in England and America has led people to seek out less traditional and more precarious forms of housing. These books examine two such forms of precarious housing, shared ownership and mobile homes. In England Cowan et al. examine shared ownership, where the occupier buys a percentage of the dwelling, usually at least 25%, and then rents the remainder with the intent to “staircase,” to full ownership through subsequent share purchases (Cowan et al. 2018:15–16). In the United States Sullivan examines mobile home ownership and the precarious land-lease model through which the occupier owns the trailer but rents the lot (Sullivan 2018:1). The partial ownership of both forms of housing leads to the risk of eviction (Sullivan 2018) as well

as uneven burdens between home associations and the occupiers (Cowan et al. 2018).

These works seek to understand how these precarious tenures affect the way scholars view property. Cowan et al. explore the conceptualization of property by examining the way shared ownership was created, sold, and understood by occupiers (Cowan et al. 2018). To do this they focused on the everyday life of ownership not on crisis moments (Cowan et al. 2018: 31). In contrast Sullivan focuses on the greatest moment of crisis, eviction due to park closure, as a way to explore the worst aspects of neoliberal privatization of low-income housing—the creation of insecure housing and the private profiting from the insecurity (Sullivan 2018). Both books achieve their goal of questioning the existing property paradigm through their examination of precarious forms of tenancy.

Sullivan conducted two years of participant observation living in parks that were closing in Florida and Texas, the two states with the most mobile homes, so she could witness the dislocation of the residents (Sullivan 2018). In addition, she interviewed professionals involved in park closing including park owners, property developers, industry representatives, lawyers, and state officials as well as mobile home movers (Sullivan 2018:22–23). She also used Geographic Information Systems to map the closure of mobile home parks in Harris County, Texas, by imputing land use records for every parcel and then tracked the loss of parks from 2002 to 2011—finding that most closures occurred at the perimeter of city limits (Sullivan 59–61).

Similarly, Cowan et al. spent time observing the management of housing associations that contained shared housing units. In addition, they conducted interviews with shared owners to determine what issues they had as part owners and ascertain how they viewed themselves, as owners or renters—they viewed themselves as owners (Cowan et al. 2018). In order to give voice to their interlocutors in Chapter 7 they set out sections of the interviews directly from their transcripts (Cowan et al. 2018:179). They also conducted archival research to trace the origin of shared ownership and marketing materials and handbooks to see the degree to which purchasers internalized the view they were owners not renters. Finally, they examined the base lease used by most housing authorities to create shared ownership and in doing so revealed how a known instrument, the lease, was used to create a new form of tenancy, shared ownership, by equating them with existing long leases (99 years) (Cowan et al. 2018).

Cowan et. al challenge the reader to question the standard thesis that property is exclusion and law; pointing out that there is elasticity at the boundaries of property both physical and

conceptual. They focus on how buyers view what they are paying for; how buyers view themselves, as owner or renter; and how this self-conceptualization is wrapped up with their identity as compared to others nearby (Cowan et al. 2018:214). Although shared ownership is not a major form of land holding in England the hybrid nature allows them to theorize that, "...ownership actually has no fixed and stable meaning, other than that which is produced." (Cowan et al. 2018:11).

The goals of Sullivan's book are to bring attention both to mobile homes as a primary form of marginal housing and to the loss suffered by residents from the closure of parks. The hidden nature of mobile homes is attributable to longstanding bias against residents of the parks as "trailer trash," which resulted in parks being zoned into marginal area, screened from view, and the belief that any use of the land is more productive than a trailer park. Sullivan recommends increasing transparency of park resident's rights; establishing a minimum six-month eviction notice; implementing mandatory and streamlined inspection process for trailer installation; and regulating relocation aide (Sullivan 2018:198–200). Although she ultimately concludes that only way to end housing insecurity in America is for a radical departure from the hegemony of property as a bundle of rights either toward communal ownership or the adoption of a right to housing (Sullivan 2018: 203–204).

The insecure land tenure described by Sullivan and Cowan et al. results in multiple problems for occupiers. Occupiers of shared ownership properties often did not understand their obligations and rights despite being provided a copy of the documents and advised by counsel. Their confusion was accentuated by the mixed tenure nature of housing associations which combined private owned, shared owned, and social (subsidized) housing. Occupiers expressed frustration at having to pay for all of the repair costs of their units when the housing association subsidized the social housing tenants and the uncertainty created by monthly maintenance fees, which could fluctuate if damage occurred to the building (Cowan 2018). Despite these problems the occupiers of shared housing, and the marketers, saw it as a way for them to "get a foot on the ladder" of home ownership (Cowan et al. 2018: 43).

The insecurity of mobile home owners was greater than those of shared owners because their owned portion, the trailer, was easily severable from their rented portion, the land. Evictions can happen at any time and many of Sullivan's interlocutors had been evicted before and all lived under the specter of eviction (Sullivan 2018). The closing of a park often cost the owners all of their investment due to rapid devaluation and even if their home could be moved it often sustained damage (Sullivan 2018).

Both books are recommended not only for their focus on less frequently studied housing models, but for the theoretical interventions they make. Both challenge the reader to think beyond the standard conceptualization of property as a bundle of rights. More importantly both bring to light the overriding desire of people in America and England to own their own home and the uncertainty they are willing to undertake in order to achieve that end. Both works also show the problems created by the neoliberal state. In England this is seen through the monetization of social housing, which has sustained political backing for shared ownership as a profitable alternative to rented social housing (Cowan et al. 2018). In America the problems of privatization of affordable housing are seen clearly in the eviction process, which leaves owners feeling helpless at the hands of corporations that have been contracted by the state to relocate their homes, but work for their own profit motive, not the benefit of the people (Sullivan 2018).

Finally, law and society scholars will find the books interesting, not only for their combination of diverse methodological approaches, but for the way both books examine property within broader social context. Indeed, from a purely legal point of view there is no case to be fought by mobile home owners, a monthly lease was simply terminated, and shared owners faced no crisis; they had a contract they were bound to perform. But, from a law and society perspective a story unfolds of loss created by the privatization of low-income housing, the stigmatization of a form of housing, and the transferring of state responsibilities to private businesses (Sullivan 2018). Similarly, Cowan et al. move beyond the law to show how a culturally created drive for home ownership, reinforced by government policy, enticed home owners to enter into an unclear land tenure when, “[t]here is nothing, ‘shared’ or ‘ownership’ about it at all.” (Cowan et al. 2018:16). While an object of the law, the lease, plays a pivotal role in the transaction, the tenure form can only be fully understood through the examination of policy, marketing, and social goals. Indeed, in both studies how and why homeowners conceptualize themselves is socially constructed by context, independent of the legal instruments that actually governs their status.

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