desired social bond. Pritchard claims that what is novel in Locke is the combination of a demand for consent in order to secure political legitimacy, as well as a caution against ritualism of any kind, be it religious or secular in nature (56). In this sense, Locke can indeed be seen as endorsing a move away from “religion”. In envisioning a project of political legitimacy grounded in consent, Locke seeks to overcome the conventions of previous political theologies which discriminate along the lines of embodiment. According to Pritchard, however, Locke overcomes such divisive legacies not by “the neutralization of the political” (80), but rather by secularizing or worlding the political (ibid.). However, he accomplishes such a secularization of the political precisely by invoking a shared consensus on God’s transcendent love for all humans, which in turn negates mankind’s ability to discriminate between “pure bodies and polluting bodies” (ibid.).

Pritchard strengthens her nuanced portrayal of a more conflicted Locke by highlighting two further aspects of Locke’s philosophy; his standpoint on which varieties of force are permissible in bringing about a social bond, and his conflicted view on the role of the family in religious and civil education. Regarding force, Pritchard shows that while conventional readings of Locke emphasize his desire to separate power and religion, he was consistently bringing these two realms together, albeit in a novel, disembodied sense (83). Locke appears most conflicted when he expounds on the role of the family in bringing about a political sensitivity and duty in individuals. On Pritchard’s account, he comes across as torn between conflicting desires to uphold benevolent patriarchal power while also promoting politics grounded in individual consent.

As a close reading of the reception history of Locke, Pritchard manages well to recast Locke as significantly more complex, even conflicted, than recent scholarship has acknowledged. The first five chapters are systematically argued and guide the reader well. The concluding chapter of the book, however, begs for more critical engagement with the concepts and binaries alluded to throughout the book. In light of Pritchard’s astute readings and accessible accounts of Locke in the first parts of the book, the closing tie-in to current discourse could have benefitted greatly from similar rigor applied to readings of Rawls and Taylor, among others.

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Originally published as a special issue of The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society (Vol. 19, May 2013), this volume explores a diverse range of blood phenomena, from the use of hematic metaphors in modern finance and reflections on blood symbolism in medieval Europe to museums of blood martyrs in Burma and discursive figures associated with blood donation. The essays are, for the most part, evenly split between historical and anthropological approaches to blood and many are indebted to Caroline Walker Bynum’s Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). Bynum’s Wonderful Blood sets the theoretical tone by attempting to partially address the long-standing anthropological interest in symbolism and the symbol’s relation to materiality. Janet Carsten picks up this note and asks us to see in her collection of
contributions, not only the possibility of an “anthropology of blood,” but also a series of serious reflections on the question: “Can we have a theory of blood?” (18).

After Carsten’s introduction, in which she provides a multi-layered theoretical frame, the essays loosely alternate between historical examinations and anthropological ethnography while wrestling with what should be done, in terms of theory, with blood after symbolism. Some articles are more successful than others in pushing beyond disciplinary boundaries, yet many provide useful insights and interesting arenas outside of the usual association of blood with human ritual or kinship. From the financial industry to blood donation to political art, blood provides a site at which to examine the materialization of the political or truth in scientific procedures, or the sanguification of war propaganda. The first essay by Kath Weston examines how organic analogies and metaphors centered on blood became connected to explanations of western economies. Weston argues that blood has the capacity to overrun such metaphors, which she refers to as “meta-materiality” (37). Those who use blood as financial metaphor to resist some oppressive order are appeal to this meta-materiality, which goes “beyond the material to figure substance through metaphor, analogy and whatever historically situated heuristic devices people find available” (37). Maya Mayblin likewise attempts to articulate how the physicality of taking soró intravenously by villagers in Northeastern Brazil is a bodily means of agency in the midst of social inequality. The villagers are motivated by conceptions of sacrifice which they associate with their production, that is, they have a ‘Catholic’ sacrificial working spirit. According to Mayblin, taking soró is a means for the villagers to by-pass the problems and inequalities associated with their normal agricultural production, while keeping their Catholic sacrificial beliefs intact.

The next two essays consider the multiplicity of blood signifiers within a bounded domain. Bettina Bildhauer investigates conceptions of blood in Medieval Europe. She asserts that Medieval European culture inherited its emphasis on blood from Roman, Greek, Germanic, or Hebrew civilizations. She finds, after looking at the significance of blood across several domains (religion, law, courts, fiction, and medicine), that there are certain characteristics that are consistent in these domains, e.g. blood as authority effect, blood as body-soul, blood as person, exceptionality of Christ’s blood, blood as inferior. These characteristics reveal blood as a significant site of “inalienable authenticity” for medieval intellectuals (59). In here essay, Fenella Cannell surveys idioms of blood in the daily life and religious thinking of American Latter-day Saints. She traces some ways that practices and conceptions, mostly focused on lineage and genealogy, have changed over time due to various influences, exposure to other “cultures,” and changes in American society that manifested in Mormonism (e.g., the desegregation of Black Americans). Cannell argues that blood is not a “single register” but “both reflects a series of partly mutually contradictory historical positions and constitutes repeated versions of the articulation of a mystery central to Mormon religious experience” (76).

Nicholas Whitfield, Susan E. Lederer, and Janet Carsten explore how changes in blood procedures and practices affect new modes of signification and differentiation. Whitfield examines the development of blood banks in London during the war years and, in particular, the rise of the rhetoric of “the gift.” He notes a “discord between the rhetoric of the gift, which implied singularity, and the reality of blood transfusion, which denied it” (94). He argues that as the blood bank developed it was associated with several versions of the concept of the gift and argues that the blood bank explains the rise of figures
of recipients, beneficiaries, and the gift. Lederer traces the diffusion of the knowledge of blood type in America in the early twentieth century. She observes how blood type was taken up in various projects of discrimination and differentiation, for example, in regulations of the Board of Health of New York, or as mass surveys in preparation for an atomic attack. Carsten uses an ethnographic study of the labs and blood banks of two private hospitals in Penang, Malaysia in order to examine how these labs transform blood from bodily substance into a scientific object, ready for analysis. She argues that throughout the blood’s movement in the lab, the blood acquires “everyday” meanings. For Carsten, this shows that even though blood is “detached from its source...[it] retains a symbolic potential” (145).

In his study of blood portraiture of freedom fighter martyrs in India, Jacob Copeman links two threads which have appeared in the previous essays, blood as a source of politics and as a source of truth. He argues that the blood portraits are a response to a perceived problem, a lack in the set of nationally recognized martyrs of independence. For Copeman, the Indian blood portraits are a “direct political intervention” in that they are an attempt to "intervene in the negotiation process of collective memory in order to revivify and stabilize a particular body of remembrances” (154). The final essay by Emily Martin investigates the absence of blood from in representations of the brain in neuroscientific research. She suggests that such bloodless representations of the brain continue to project an untenable body/brain division as well as “relegate blood to the lower, ‘female’ portions of the human body” (180).

This collection of essays is a worthy read providing something of a prolegomenon to an anthropological study of blood symbolisms and practices. The book also includes a handful of color images which add an effective visceral element to some of the essays, particularly those of Bildhauer, Whitfield, and Martin.

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In October 2009, at the Great Hall of New York City’s Cooper Union, Jürgen Habermas, Charles Taylor, Judith Butler, and Cornel West spoke and engaged into a dialogue on what seems to be a pressing concern for today’s academia, politics and beyond: the inclusion of religion in the ‘public sphere’ and implications thereof. The book under review here, The Power of Religion in The Public Sphere, comprises of essays, abbreviated versions of which were first presented at the mentioned public forum, which the editors understandably call an ‘undeniably epic event’ (viii). The fact that since Rawls barely any philosophical contribution has been to the study of religion in the public sphere justifies the editors’ choice of attribute; and, in fact, this also points to the significance of the theoretical intervention these four scholars goes on to make in the field.

In this book, the quadruple has set out to problematize what Charles Taylor nails at the very outset of his essay: the assumption that “modern democracies have to be ‘secular’” (34). They question the philosophical discourse of modernity and its liaison with secularism that has increasingly depleted traces of religion from the domain of the public sphere, and made “cultures of religiosity” appear redundant from the point