



# **Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines (2002)**

*Philippe Bourgois*

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Since its founding in the nineteenth century, social anthropology has been seen as the study of exotic peoples in faraway places. But today more and more anthropologists are dedicating themselves not just to observing but to understanding and helping solve social problems wherever they occur—in international aid organizations, British TV studios, American hospitals, or racist enclaves in Eastern Europe, for example.

In *Exotic No More*, an initiative of the Royal Anthropological Institute, some of today's most respected anthropologists demonstrate, in clear, unpretentious prose, the tremendous contributions that anthropology can make to contemporary society. They cover issues ranging from fundamentalism to forced migration, child labor to crack dealing, human rights to hunger, ethnicity to environmentalism, intellectual property rights to international capitalisms. But *Exotic No More* is more than a litany of gloom and doom; the essays also explore topics usually associated with leisure or "high" culture, including the media, visual arts, tourism, and music. Each author uses specific examples from their fieldwork to illustrate their discussions, and 62 photographs enliven the text.

Throughout the book, the contributors highlight anthropology's commitment to taking people seriously on their own terms, paying close attention to what they are saying and doing, and trying to understand how they see the world and why. Sometimes this bottom-up perspective makes the strange familiar, but it can also make the familiar strange, exposing the cultural basis of seemingly "natural" behaviors and challenging us to rethink some of our most cherished ideas—about gender, "free" markets, "race," and "refugees," among many others.

Contributors:

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#### **Kimberly Dyer:**

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#### **Latoya Palos:**

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