Another vexing effect of "following the buzz" is that the book is not built around a particular sociological conversation or puzzle. "Buzz" is an allegory, not a theoretical construct; the bee often serves as an occasion for the authors to "meditate" (as the book jacket says) on larger, disparate social issues ranging from the social construction of the AIDS epidemic to Americans' use of drone strikes in Afghanistan and our cultural obsession with zombies. *Buzz* does creatively deploy sociological ideas to make sense of the human-bee relations that it describes; yet it seldom critiques, integrates, or augments these ideas (a typical formulation: "Buying honey from a particular borough demonstrates the sociologist Thorstein Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption" [p. 188]). This underspecification of the sociological contribution is evident in the conclusion, where the authors indicate that the main takeaway of their investigation is that "we are indeed deeply intimate and interdependent with the bee as a species and the bee as a fellow urban dweller" (p. 210).

A variety of scholars will find a lot to like in *Buzz*. Locating beekeeping within the "urban homesteading" trend makes the bee relevant to a surprising array of social scientific issues, from gentrification (most beekeepers are middle-class "hipsters") to environmental politics. And animal studies scholars will appreciate the authors' analysis of how honeybees blur the boundaries between typical animal categories (neither purely wild nor domestic, both pet and instrument). Indeed, the book is at its strongest, and most interesting, in discussing the moral quandaries that beekeepers face (they love their bees yet "steal" their honey), elaborating how "bees have created a new place and social space for the city farmer" (p. 214), and showing how our relations with bees are a microcosm for debates about the best way to promote environmental sustainability in the age of the Anthropocene. Last, by highlighting bees' "agency," *Buzz* helps illustrate what may be the most important sociological warrant for studying animals: they do not merely *reflect* the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves, they *shape* society's stories.

Coming Up Short: Working-class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty. By Jennifer M. Silva. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xii+192. $29.95.

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Coming Up Short: Working-class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty is one of those academic books that is informative, emotionally engaging, and accessible. Throughout, Jennifer Silva details the plight of America's young working-class people and their transitions to and experiences of adulthood. Contrary to debates that suggest that contemporary young adulthood is delayed or that there is a new, emerging stage, Silva argues persuasively

that young working-class people now have to reimagine adulthood, and consequently, what it means to be a working-class adult is itself being transformed. But this reimagining is not, to borrow a well-known phrase, in the terms of their choosing. Partly drawing on theories of reflexive/late modernity, among others, Silva argues that a perfect storm of neoliberalism, deindustrialization, individualization, and risk have altered traditional forms of and pathways to working-class adulthood. Now, in the 21st century, the therapeutic self is the pathway of "choice"—or perhaps more precisely the only game in town for many working-class young people. A game that, Silva deftly illustrates, cuts the very notion of choice, agency, and above all solidarity from underneath them.

Silva's book is based on 100 interviews conducted with young working-class people in Lowell, Massachusetts, and Richmond, Virginia. For a reader from the United Kingdom, like me, the description of the locations, both in the appendix and the main text itself, was fascinating and very useful by way of context. The average age of Silva's sample of young people was 27. They were fairly evenly mixed in terms of race and gender and not exclusively heterosexual. Indeed, it was good to hear these diverse voices and especially the voices of young lesbian, gay, or bisexual people from working-class backgrounds, who are often hidden in the sociology of youth and adulthood. It was also good to see an informative and reflective commentary about the methods Silva used in the appendix.

Throughout the book, Silva draws on the interviews, and we meet a wide cross section of working-class young people. There is Wanda, a black woman in her midtwenties who avoids romantic connections, trying desperately not to replicate the mistakes that she thinks her parents have made. There is Rebecca, 27 years old, white and let down by an education system which appeared to promise a gateway to a new life, but that instead left her feeling painfully exposed by its academic culture; after dropping out she becomes indebted because of school and medical bills. Their stories, among others, are told respectfully but critically, and Silva is adept at drawing out the complexities, nuances, and contradictions that they contain. To her credit she does this in a way that does not render these young people cultural dupes; often the young people Silva interviewed are fully and painfully aware of their situation, and the interview presented them with an opportunity to release and relieve their myriad traumas, whether large or small. Sometimes I had the sensation, and this is perhaps something Silva could have delved into in a little more detail in places, that the therapeutic self these young people so wanted to have recognized was indeed something that was taking place in the interview itself. She was, as I have argued in my own work, positioned as someone who could bestow recognition and legitimacy for the adult selves that these young people were conjuring before her eyes. What she does clearly show, however, is how a slogan like "the personal is political," once a mantra for collective action and resistance, has become distorted by a neoliberal clarion that reifies the therapeutic self and an individualized form of working-class adulthood.

Intersections of race, gender, and sexuality are drawn out in Silva's analysis of her participants' stories and linked back to questions of individualization and the emergence of a mood economy. Silva documents how time and again, young working-class people of differing races, genders, and sexual orientations get let down and individuated by institutions that would once have been routes to a stable adulthood—a good example being the military. She suggests that some institutions, however, continue to provide a safety net, and in some public services a route to a more traditional form of working-class masculinity prevailed. Moreover, there are, among all the distress, problems, and foreshortened opportunities, some stories of hope and success. But, as Silva notes, when success is bought through connections and networks, these are often rendered into stories of individual attainment by the young people. In the chapter "Hardened Selves," she paints a bleak picture of a neoliberal subject who emphasizes self-reliance and individualism to such an extent that I was left wondering it there could ever be or indeed will ever be an alternative. In the conclusion Silva does offer a prescription for change, including recommendations for a living wage, basic social protections, and the requisite skills and information needed to challenge whatever comes next. Furthermore, she offers a sliver of hope, as she says: "Their coming of age stories are still unfolding, their futures not yet written" (p. 156).

I enjoyed reading this book. It will stay in my memory long after it returns to my bookshelf, although I suspect it will not stay there long. For sociologists of youth and adulthood, like me, it contains many insights that spur the sociological imagination. But above all, the young working-class lives that Silva enables us to hear will continue to haunt me. They may be "coming up short" in an economic and social system that promises much, yet often delivers little, but to my mind and throughout Silva's book, they are adults with important messages to convey and lives to lead.

Education, Social Background and Cognitive Ability: The Decline of the Social. By Gary N. Marks. New York: Routledge, 2014. Pp. xii+292. $155.00.

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In *Education, Social Background and Cognitive Ability: The Decline of the Social*, Gary Marks forcefully argues that cognitive ability has much more impact and social background has much less impact on educational and career attainment than sociologists commonly profess—despite their own good evidence that supports Marks's position. His close review of this research largely supports key tenets of now-unfashionable modernization theory and challenges the presumptions of now-ascendant reproduction theory.