French's work makes an important contribution to literature on ethnolinguistic identity and the Maya movement in Guatemala. By considering the actors themselves, how decisions are being made, and why particular aspects of identity are valorized over others, French calls into question the very foundation of the pan-Maya movement and potentially points out why the movement has only enjoyed moderate success in the postviolence era. Her points and suggestions about the pan-Maya movement have critical implications as the movement and the nation continue their struggle towards a multicultural state. French's fifth chapter on gender strikes a particularly relevant chord that can act as a sounding board for research as to the place and function of men and women and their different roles in the creation of a Maya-inclusive nation. The book will be of particular interest to scholars and graduate students in anthropology, linguistics, Mesoamerican studies, and other social sciences, particularly those focused on social movements and identity.

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Hip Hop Desis: South Asian Americans, Blackness, and a Global Race Consciousness. *Nitasha Tamar Sharma*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010. xiv + 351 pp.

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While studies of hip hop and studies of South Asian Americans, or "desis" ("[those] of the land," from the Sanskrit *deśa* "land, region"), are numerous, there has been little in-depth work on South Asian Americans who write and perform hip hop. *Hip Hop Desis* fills this lacuna by investigating how, why, and to what ends the titular "hip hop desis" engage with and participate in hip hop music and culture (also *Desi Rap*, A. Nair and M. Balaji, eds., Lexington Books, 2008). The book's larger goal, however, is more expansive, reflecting these hip hop desis' wider socio-political horizons. Hip hop for these desis extends beyond musical appreciation and production to the contestation and negotiation of existing racial(ized) identities and inequalities, and thus into critical politics and community building. It is in their radical political imaginary and critical voice that Sharma locates the sociological and political importance of these cultural brokers. By "sampling" these liminal desis' life stories, Sharma gives us her "ode to the music and culture" (p. 36), as well as an alternative to the staid discourses of race that permeate "mainstream" American hip hop and popular culture, and their study.

Among Sharma's many contributions to cultural studies, ethnic studies, black studies, and ethnomusicology, one of the most important is her intervention against the reductive explanation that (South) Asian engagements with hip hop are simply forms of "blackface." Sharma convincingly argues that while this might be the case for some ("mainstream") desis, it is not so for her more politically sensitive hip hop desis. In fact, it is in reaction to the racism of "hegemonic desiness" (and their parents) that hip hop desis attempt to create "alternative desiness" (p. 74) (and blackness) through hip hop. As Sharma shows, in doing so these hip hop desis problematize the "model minority myth" that South Asians are honorary whites, and thus necessitate that we expand what we consider "desi."

In levying these critiques Sharma and her informants go to great lengths to demonstrate that South Asians and blacks have structurally similar social experiences of inequality, historically (vis-à-vis colonialism and slavery) and synchronically (vis-à-vis contemporary racism), even if, in fact, most "mainstream" desis downplay such similarities by aligning to white society and its forms of racism (ch. 1). It is precisely in this fractally recursed conjuncture of racism (whites towards South Asians and blacks; South Asians towards blacks) that these hip hop desis locate their anti-racism politics. Through hip hop these desis highlight commonalities across racial lines in ways that attempt to forge solidarities among oppressed peoples. They do so not by de-racializing hip hop, but by racializing themselves; in effect, abstracting race from biologistic ethno-theories of race to a more general experience of racial inequality. In doing so these desis attempt to remake ethnicity (ch. 1), race (ch. 2), and gender (ch. 3), all the while promoting more equitable social politics.

While linguistic anthropologists looking for fine-grained semiotic analysis of language use and social interaction may be disappointed, the book is chock full of empirical examples of what Sharma calls, borrowing a term from hip hop production, "sampling." Sharma provides wonderful descriptions of the multiple ways desis interdiscursively cite forms of dress, talk, demeanor, political stance, and musical style linked to enregistered models of (male) person-hood prevalent within black hip hop. This is, in fact, the meat and bones of the text and its argument, and those looking for contextualized illustrations of such sampling will be pleased to find them in abundance.

Sharma deftly explores the motivations, politics, and social contexts within which these reanimations of hip hop personhood take place, arguing that such reanimations voice desis' own local concerns, whether this be to navigate the often contradictory mandates of being young, American, desi, and not white (or black), or to articulate their own race politics. Sharma shows how these youth sample blackness and desiness in a variety of relationships and community contexts—in kin groups, desi and nondesi peer groups, romantic relationships, and in the hip hop community at large—across lines of generation, class (ch. 1–2), gender and sexual identity (ch. 3), politics (ch. 4), and race (ch. 5). Especially interesting are her various discussions of D'Lo, a Sri Lankan originating, gender queer artist who identifies as "boi." Sharma shows how D'Lo navigates a complex politics of gender, sexuality, and race precisely through creatively troping on, for all its affordances and hindrances, black hip hop masculinity.

The crux of the argument, however, is not simply that these multiform complexities lead to these young desis' sampling forms of racialized personhood, but that they lead to a sustained engagement with the politics of race and a transformation of subjectivity, what Sharma calls "a global race consciousness." This is certainly how her informants, mostly in their thirties when Sharma did her research, reflect on their experiences growing up in the "golden era of hip hop" of the 1980s and 1990s. But one wonders what other kinds of interactions, identities, pleasures, and anxieties become invisible in such retrospectives and what other kinds of social projects and ways of being in the world elude this political telos.

We get hints of such other social projects in references to "status" negotiations within the desi community (ch. 1–2), the complexities of intra/intercommunal romantic engagements (ch. 3), and forms of distinction (and money) making in the hip hop and desi communities (ch. 4–5). But somehow these never come to the fore of the discussion. Why Sharma sticks so close to these desis' reflexive accounts of their politics reveals itself when we get to the final third of the book (ch. 4–5), when Sharma finally deals with the politics of racial authenticity. As Sharma tells us on the penultimate page (p. 298), by focusing on these understudied desis she has attempted to steer us away from the problematics and traps of the discourse of racial authenticity. However, by trying to argue past the politics of authenticity through hip hop desis who attempt to confound it Sharma never sufficiently confronts how such authenticity politics mediates and conditions the social life and politics of these desi in the first place. Indeed, why is it that these desis participate not in "mainstream" hip hop but "ethnic hip hop" (which utilizes emblems of South Asian authenticity that they can access) and "conscious hip hop" ("underground" hip hop whose legitimacy is based on a kind of political and musical con-noisseurship)? Why can't, indeed, these desis dress (p. 80) and speak (p. 222, 242) in particular hip hop styles without eliciting the interpretation of being like those (nonblack) "wannabee hip hoppers" (p. 80)? Rather than being seen as the very ground upon which these desis' engage-ments with hip hop is played out, Sharma poses the discourse of racial authenticity as exterior to these desis' consciousness and politics. Not dressing like a "bling rapper," not dropping the "n-word," or not doing "commercial" hip hop are more often than not presented as choices, as reflections of their pre-existing politics and aesthetics.

One result is that the very logic of authenticity that Sharma so successfully debunks at one level is replicated at another, what she calls "anti-essentialist authenticity" (p. 272). This is her gloss, more or less, for how these desis talk about their own engagement with hip hop (i.e., their strategies of self-legitimation): "knowledge, respect, and dedication" (274 ff.) to racialized hip hop and a sincere engagement with social and racial inequality. And in pointing to their creative response to the status quo politics of racial authenticity, Sharma advances our thinking about hip hop and blackness. But the argument can be pushed further, authenticity is itself a cluster of ideological constructs that suffuses these interactions and communities, such that any value project that enters this field—be it "mainstream" commercial or "underground" "conscious" hip hop—must orient itself to these ideologies in order to be intelligible in the first place. From this point of view, the story of *Hip Hop Desis* is not simply the co-mediation of hip hop culture and desi reanimations of it (or the political entailments therein), but how such medial interdiscursivities are themselves always already mediated by ideology.

One outcome of the vigorous amount of energy put into authorizing these desis is that, surprisingly, black voices are largely absent from the text. Who are the black hip hoppers these desis interact with? How do they talk about and interact with their desi peers? How do they (co-)negotiate the politics of authenticity in hip hop? What is their part in bridging the gaps between "desiness" and "blackness"?

Hip Hop Desis is a crucial contribution to the hip hop and ethnic studies literatures. It offers fresh insight into discussions plagued with essentialisms and reductions. By turning our attention to those exception and liminal cultural brokers who participate in both desi and hip hop cultures, *Hip Hop Desis* defies simplistic assumptions about what it means, and what it should mean, to be black or desi in America. An important contribution to explicating the complex mosaic that is hip hop, this book is a must have for scholars interested in race and ethnicity in America, and hip hop's critical place in it.

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Gender, Sexuality, and Meaning: Linguistic Practice and Politics. *Sally McConnell-Ginet*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. vi + 282 pp.

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This collection of essays, published from the late 1970s to early 2000, introduces McConnell-Ginet's work explaining how language reinforces, or subverts, male and heterosexual privilege in English speaking communities. A respected formal linguist having forged the field of feminist linguistics, McConnell-Ginet argues that concern for gender equity requires formal linguists to deal with language-in-use. This approach was, and continues to be, highly innovative because formal linguists do not, in principle, view language as spoken as-it-happens communication. Formal linguists understand "core linguistic capacity to be a species universal biological characteristic;" whereas feminist scholars and scholars of language-in-use understand language to be always socially and politically constructed down to basic grammatical foundations (p. 42). The book does not resolve these deep theoretical and methodological tensions; for example, there is no gender critique of biological language theories. It posits, rather, that language-in-use should shape the questions linguists ask so as to reflect lived experience, while the rigors of linguistic analysis are necessary for answering these questions.

As a starting point, McConnell-Ginet accepts that biology and social construction each play linguistic roles in deciding sex and gender categories. She argues that language addressed to different audiences, speech variation within a single identity group, and differently gendered grammatical structures across cultures demonstrate that genderlects are not based on the sex of the speaker. Social construction, therefore, may eventually be recognized as the more accurate analytic lens through which to view language (p. 29). Her social constructivist approach builds on a theoretical shift within identity studies, which understands *strategies* communities engage to constitute identities rather than viewing identity as essential markings of sameness (p. 47). Reading Lakoff (1975) to mean that language is symbolically associated with maleness and femaleness without correspondence to actual people highlights her point that identity formation is, in part, a process of shared speech strategies (p. 15 and p. 47).

I wondered whether the construction of identity and persona as analytic frames precluded systemic analysis of the discrimination she discusses. For example, her analysis of Larry Summers' controversial 2005 Harvard speech, where he said that women are biologically programmed to be uninterested in science, was that Summers may have not wanted to inhabit his wider public persona as president of Harvard and as a result ignored his audience, which included successful women scientists (p. 23–24). She suggests that men, particularly those in powerful public positions, need be sensitive to those women who break the stereotype (p. 23–24). This reasoning assumes that these men would adopt this sensitivity, if they only