on the idea that anthropologists are co-producers of events and stories and that the boundaries between the different kinds of knowledge, or in this case, the experiences of the nothing, are utterly fluid. Yet, this collaboration still generates certain boundaries and often creates conditions of doubt. This is explicitly captured in the book by the story of Oz, who at some points of time deletes the author from his Facebook account and tries to avoid contact with him, while at other times Oz adds him once again and continues his interaction with him. Does this oscillation between openness and closure towards the author hint at different scales of the nothing, as well as the boundaries between the collaborators? What kind of imagination is actually co-created and shared in this case? And finally, what kind of knowledge is gained from this ‘collaborative imagination’ anyway? It is obvious that in this collaborative ethnographic endeavour one can doubt and destabilise what is seen, and through this doubting the conversation and collaboration can become quite ambivalent. It is a bit of a shame that this ambivalence is never unveiled by Frederiksen, which could allow us to gain an understanding of the nothing itself.

Overall, this is a book that should be read by anyone who is interested in experimental techniques of ethnographic writing, in the wonders and ambivalences of the nothing in particular, and in the ways in which traditional ethnographic descriptions can be substituted by anthropological fiction and imagination. Frederiksen does this with great skill and brilliance, while leaving the reader wondering about the future of anthropological thinking, writing and doing fieldwork.

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chapters by scholars directly associated with Austkin II and others not so directly involved. The essays are complemented by an Introduction by Patrick McConvell that usefully summarises the contributions.

Several interrelated themes emerge. First is the history of anthropological accounts of ‘skins’ (indirectly inherited social categories) and clans. Piers Kelly and Patrick McConvell usefully recount the development of the understanding of Aboriginal social categories, from Scott Nind’s perceptive account of phratries in the Albany district in the early nineteenth century, through the evolutionist scheme of Fison and Howitt, which drew on Morgan’s theories, Radcliffe-Brown’s 1931 and Lévi-Strauss’s 1969 structuralist syntheses, to the ‘new kinship’, which Kelly and McConvell conclude has been less influential in Australia than elsewhere.

Allied to an historical perspective, Laurent Dousset’s chapter examines how Australian social categories (moieties, clans, and so on) have been represented spatially by anthropologists and others. Maps tend to legitimise, and transmit, particular visions of reality, Dousset argues. He begins with Maris Pacifici by Abraham Ortelius (1589), and moves through evolutionist and structural-functionalist representations, including the depiction of dynamic aspects of spatial relations, to more recent digital approaches, particularly within the Austkin project. Dousset relates this trajectory to changes in the conceptualisation of society in general, and Aboriginal social forms in particular, and discusses the complexities of representing social institutions and attributes in graphic form. With a move away from a holistic approach to society, maps tended to drop out of anthropological accounts, in part because of their legal implications, as in land rights cases for example. Recent mapping is more particularistic.

A second theme touches on controversies about the character of Aboriginal social groups and categories, addressed in Raymond Madden’s account of arguments about western Victorian ‘clans’. Madden surveys nineteenth and early twentieth-century accounts by Dawson and Howitt, and compares these with the more recent survey by Ian Clark. Madden accepts Dawson’s and Howitt’s analysis of land-owning groups as patrilineal, contrasting these with Clark’s reconstructions, according to which they are matrilineal. Madden argues that Clark confuses dispersed matrilineal clans (which were widespread in the southeast of the continent) with landowning groups, which were patrilineal.

Madden’s concern is the uncritical acceptance of such accounts on the part of Aboriginal groups and other bodies in such matters as Native Title litigation. The current Indigenous ideology in Western Victoria is that their society was matrilineal. While I think that Madden’s concerns are justified, the interpretations of Dawson and Howitt should be treated with caution. Howitt saw eastern Victorian groups at many levels of inclusiveness as patrilineal, including the regional or language identities that were partly endogamous, and hence recruited bilaterally.

In a third theme, four chapters discuss the characteristics of particular kinds of system, including moieties, patriclan sets, phratries, and aspects of kin terminology. Mark Harvey contrasts the degree of disputation over terminologies to do with kinship and land tenure in the Alligator Rivers region of the Northern Territory, particularly as influenced by colonisation. His general finding is that, consistent with other regions of Australia, there was little disputation over land ownership in the region, in contrast with debates over kin categories and marriage claims. In the course of the discussion Harvey outlines kin and related terminologies together with marriage practices, and the complex terminologies associated with the ownership of country. Harvey idiosyncratically coins the term ‘matry’ for matrilineal phratries. Etymologically a phratry is a ‘brotherhood’, so that ‘matry’ seems inappropriate for a ‘sisterhood’.

Harold Koch, the late Luise Hercus, and Piers Kelly survey moiety names in southeastern Australia, distinguishing six terminological sets from the east of South Australia to Central
Victoria. They discern the origins of the names in the formerly highly populated regions of the Murray and Darling rivers, concluding that these spread primarily by diffusion following the differentiation of languages. For the most part, pairs of moiety names overlap language boundaries.

Drawing primarily on the publications and field notes of Daisy Bates and Radcliffe-Brown, Peter Sutton surveys the evidence for patriclan sets or ‘phratries’ in the Ashburton district of Western Australia. He compares these structures with analogous categories in other parts of the continent, including patrifilial phratries of northeast Arnhem Land. Structures in the Ashburton district were groupings of patrilineal clans that cross-cut the territories of linguistic groups and were related to totemic identities. They were not systematically aligned with section identities, nor were they consistently exogamous. Like sections and subsections, alternative names were assigned to male and female members.

Tony Jefferies’ chapter seeks to show that Aboriginal people apply the ‘close-distant’ dichotomy in two ways: to refer to physical distance, and to genealogical distance, and that the dichotomy is intrinsic to Australian kinship. In his review of references to this feature in the classical anthropological literature, Jefferies notes the tendency among some analysts to conflate ‘distant’ with ‘classificatory’ kin. In some societies kin proximity derives from patrigroup relations. In particular, Jefferies contrasts kinship in the Western Desert, in which genealogically and socially close cross-cousins were converted to siblings and became non-marriageable, with kinship on Groote Eylandt, where imputed kinship distance relates in part to historical inter-clan relations, and with Ngarinyin kinship, in which certain kin terms are extended to intergroup relations, implying varying degrees of distance.

Mary McLaughlan describes and analyses the Waanyi kin terminology in detail, comparing it with the somewhat similar Warlpiri system. The Waanyi terminology differs from the Warlpiri one in key ways: genders are distinguished in maternal grandparent terms, for example, but not paternal ones. McLaughlan explores whether the differences can be explained by differences in marriage prescriptions and preferences, or whether they are down to relations with neighbouring systems. In a survey of languages of the southeastern Northern Territory and the neighbouring Queensland border, she finds that the ‘anomalies’ in the terminology reflect a shared system of marriage alliance and wife bestowal in a context of social and linguistic interaction between the peoples of the southern Gulf of Carpentaria region’ (424).

A fourth theme addresses the historical origins of category types, names for categories, and trirelational kinship terminologies. Patrick McConvell extends his earlier research on the history of Australian subsection systems by surveying the distribution of section systems in Australia, then examining the origin of section systems in Queensland, with a brief excursion to similar systems in South America. He scrutinises earlier theories such as that sections arose from the division of moieties. Following a comprehensive historical linguistic inquiry, McConvell speculates convincingly that section systems in Queensland arose out of marriages between patrimoieties or patriphratries of neighbouring territories or language groups, then examines the spread of the general section system across Queensland.

In a methodologically sophisticated chapter, McConvell and Ponsonnet examine the distribution and spread of particular names for subsections (‘skins’) in northern and central Australia, and find that colexification between ‘dermis’ and ‘social category’ (including ‘subsection’) first occurred in the Iwaidjan language family and some Gunwinyguan neighbours, then spread into pidgin around the Coburg Peninsula during early contact with the British settlement at Coburg, and subsequently more widely into Aboriginal English and Kriol. The chapter considers other, more widely scattered colexifications such as ‘head’, ‘body’, and ‘smell’, representing semantic clusters with semantic maps.
In a related chapter, Harold Koch examines the temporal and spatial development of section and subsection names in the Arandic languages, drawing on early sources. Koch focusses especially on variation in subsection and section names and the number of categories, even within a language group. He essays a chronology for the diffusion of skins into the Arandic languages in the early nineteenth century, and confirms their generally northern origin, tracing changes along the way.

Trirelational kin terms have evolved independently in several Aboriginal languages. In his chapter on trirelation kinterms in Murrinhpatha, Joe Blythe argues that similar social forces have led to their development, including prohibitions on the use of personal names in the context of universal kinship. (Blythe refers to universal kinship somewhat misleadingly as classificatory kinship). Blythe’s research methods are well illustrated in this chapter, especially his use of video-recorded conversations from which the researcher is absent, in conjunction with elicitation methods. The chapter is supplemented with transcript material.

This rich and varied volume adds very significantly to the anthropological and linguistic understanding of Aboriginal social categories. Consistent with ANU Press policy the ebook version is available free online, and the paperback may be ordered from the press.

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Herlands: Exploring the Women’s Land Movement in the United States, by Keridwen N. Luis, Minneapolis and London, University of Minnesota Press, 2018, 302 pp., images, notes, bibliography, index, (paperback). ISBN: 978-0-81669825-7

The cover art of Herlands depicts dense greenery overlaid by cartographic contour lines. It is the perfect metaphor for this book. On first glance, it suggests that the work will furnish a map or orientation to these otherwise impenetrable lands. A closer examination indicates that the contour lines carry no values. They can provide almost no guidance and may actually generate more confusion. Keridwen Luis has undertaken an ambitious study which attempts to tackle what women’s lands mean and the complicated and often contradictory reality of the multiple practical approaches to creating them. Unfortunately, like those contour lines, the book fails to deliver the insights it promises.

Communities of women living on rural lands in the USA have a long history (starting with the Women’s Commonwealth in 1879) but the bulk were created in the 1970s as one component of the women’s liberation movement. Feminists and lesbians who were interested in developing women-centred cultural, social, and economic alternatives founded many different women’s lands. At least one hundred remain in existence. Forms of land tenure range from privately owned property to land trusts, and from perennial residential communities to lands occupied by one woman as well as those which are available for sojourns but have no permanent inhabitants. Many of the women who live on or look after these lands have written accounts of their experiences, while their ecological and sexual politics have been the subject of scholarship in environmental studies, geography, and history. Herlands is one of the first anthropological approaches and is based on extensive research. Luis