Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.
the research tied into the sites where her studies were based. That is, it is clear that the book is the product of an academic life, which sprawls across the sites and enfolds other people as well: children are born, a grandmother passes away. The web of relations that sustained this research is laid bare, and like the author we have to think through the constant sense of loss that comes with movement in space and time. In one particularly touching passage DeSilvey discusses her last visit with her grandmother, and in that moment we can see both the necessity of letting go but all the reasons why we do not want to. It is a very human response to want to maintain all the things that have brought us joy and meaning, but it is the human condition to be unable to do so. Curated Decay sparked my meditation on these matters and I hope it will do the same for you.

Jason Dittmer

University College London, United Kingdom
E-mail address: j.dittmer@ucl.ac.uk.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhge.2020.04.008

Capitalist Pigs: Pigs, Pork, and Power in America, J.L. Anderson (Ed.). West Virginia University Press, Morgantown (2019). 285 pages, US$99.99 hardcover

In the midst of the global Covid-19 pandemic that has cost hundreds of thousands of humans lives as of May 2020, the most recent twist on the deadly impacts of this virus is happening to livestock in America. Covid-19 outbreaks among employees in US slaughterhouses have closed many of these facilities leading to millions of chickens and pigs destined for the human food supply being killed on farms because they can’t be processed. This breakdown of the industrial agricultural livestock system unfolded as I read Anderson’s timely Capitalist Pigs: Pigs, Pork, and Power in America which aims to tell the story of how ‘the exercise of power over people, pigs, and geography was one of the most significant developments in American history’ (p. 10).

The book, for the most part, spirals chronologically in eight chapters that focus on the arrival of pigs to America, how they lived ‘on the range,’ their role in working people’s lives, their impact on urban living, the process of processing, illnesses, marketing, and present-day industrial science. There are numerous historical images and a few maps to illustrate the material along with a notes section documenting sources by chapter. The style of the text itself is more of a compilation of historical facts and first-person stories rather than an ongoing analytical narrative. This makes it a fast and straightforward read, but one without any theoretical grounding in economic, political, or geographical theory.

The making of America’s ‘geography’ began in 1539 with Hernando de Soto who brought Spanish hogs to Florida. As Europeans began settling the East Coast, their pigs came with them. The pigs were both a curse and a food source for Native Americans because the pigs, who largely foraged for themselves in the wild, competed with Native peoples for food and destroyed their crops. ‘Indigenous people understood that livestock were agents of empire’ (p. 14), but could do little about them. By the time of the Civil War, pigs had firmly planted themselves in all areas of the fledgling country, but their role in the war was profound. From ‘cleaning up’ battle sites by consuming bodies, to being consumed by both Union and Confederate armies, and to being a constant food source for enslaved peoples and the poor free people, the geography of pig agriculture shifted after the war to favor the north and Midwest states because of their ability to produce vast quantities of corn to the economic determinant of the South. This allowed places like Cincinnati, Ohio, to become America’s self-identified ‘Porkopolis’ by the mid-1800s. The rise of industrial agriculture in the second half of the twentieth century allowed places in the south like North Carolina to bring back pig farming, albeit in the form of intensive and enclosed government-named concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

Anderson documents the transformation of pig farming from the colonial days when pigs were mainly left to forage for themselves in the landscape, to the move to rudimentary enclosure of pigs for parts of the year, to steadily more intensified systems based on new standards of breeding and sanitation. Pigs, throughout all these evolutions, have had to be constantly controlled because their intelligence and their rooting can cause great destruction. Methods such as yoking and putting rings through their snouts to protect the environment have today given way to practices such as cutting off their tails to protect them from each other in confined stalls (they will chew each other’s tails off otherwise because of the stress they are under). Farming pigs has always been a risky economic undertaking. One of the main reasons is related to the various diseases pigs can catch which, like today’s Covid-19 Coronavirus, rapidly spread to entire herds decimating both incomes and food stability. Some of the earliest charges of the federal government’s Department of Agriculture were to try and solve livestock diseases like hog cholera — finally eradicated in the country in 1978 after a decades-long push to educate farmers and get pigs vaccinated and/or isolated. The spread of a variety of viruses in the industrial systems today have led to widespread use of antibiotics to prevent sickness which has had the disturbing effect of contributing to antibiotic-resistant strains of diseases.

Anderson documents the cultural associations and transformations among social groups that have shaped human relations and food markets. For most of America’s history, beef has been the marker of wealth and high culture even though pigs have been ubiquitous. During the time of slavery, research has shown that pig portions were the main source of meat protein allocated (in small amounts) to enslaved peoples. Punishments for stealing pigs were often extremely harsh although stealing to supplement meager diets was probably a regular occurrence. For working-class farmers in the post-civil war period through World War II, pigs were a reliable source of food and self-sufficiency because they provided meat, fat, and lard. Indeed, the pigs then were an entirely different shape, because the fat/lard was so essential to both home economies and industrial applications. But as concerns about fat in the diet grew with both the increasingly urbanizing and sedentary human populations, pork began to be seen as unhealthy. Pork producers then worked to literally reshape pigs to towards a more leaner build and worked to re-inspire the public’s desire through campaigns such as ‘Pork, the other white meat.’ Anderson ends with how the public relations campaigns of the pork industry has hit multiple snags in recent years because of the environmental contamination of water supplies from pig farms, the adverse health impacts on people living near huge pig farms, growing awareness of the cruelties perpetrated on pigs in CAFOs, and the health, safety, and economic issues faced by the largely immigrant and minority communities working on the farms and in the packing plants.

While Anderson has compiled a tremendous amount of material that does convey the essential role of pigs to America’s development, I found the book wanting for several reasons. First, there was no discussion of how he went about researching the material he found. Considering the variety of primary source documents, it would have been fascinating to get a deeper understanding of the
research process and some explanation in this area would have made the book more relevant to historically-minded scholars. Second, for a book about pigs there was sadly very little about the pigs themselves, which feels like an incredible oversight considering the rise of academic interest in nonhuman animal agency across the social sciences over the past decades. Leaving aside what we have come to know and understand about pigs themselves means that he reinforces the currently contested view that these living beings are nothing but commodities. Third, the lack of real analysis of capitalism in relation to the present-day industrialized system makes the title of the book confusing. The last chapter crams together a lot of statements about what is happening with industrialized agriculture in terms of workers, environmental pollution, and biotechnologies but fails to put it in the context of where, why, and how the ‘power’ in his title is being deployed. While it is a useful book for its well-researched historical anecdotes, its lack of critical analysis ultimately does not provide an adequate account of pigs and power in America—especially for what is at stake in the present era.

Julie Urbanik
The Coordinates Society, USA
E-mail address: julie.urbanik@gmail.com.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhgc.2020.05.007

On March 22, 1861, the United States created the territory of Colorado, an act that immediately separated administrative control over some 7,000 Hispano settlers from their cultural homeland in New Mexico. As the far northern outpost of colonial Spain, administrators in Santa Fe had long established loose control over much of southern Colorado through military expeditions and patrols, and after Mexican independence in 1821, settlers began expanding outwards from the Rio Arriba of the upper Rio Grande Valley into what is now Colorado. Land grants were issued in the 1830s in the San Luis Valley, but the harsh environmental conditions and conflicts with indigenous natives initially led to settlement failure. By 1851, the first permanent town of San Luis was established, and settlements grew in what are now both Conejos and Costilla counties, with latersettlers spreading east over the Sangre de Cristo mountains into Huerfano and Las Animas counties. Despite these facts, Congress favored a tidy rectangular shape for the new Colorado territory and ignored New Mexico’s claims over these lands. Independent scholar Virginia Sánchez has written this book to document the hardships and injustices the Hispano settlers suffered when suddenly administered by a foreign Anglo legislature from a distant Denver. She states that the book ‘has identified some key issues that greatly impacted the lives of the Hispanic citizens who found themselves living in Colorado territory’ (p. 275).

Sánchez contributes original archival research and summarizes secondary literature to categorize events and the adverse situations Hispano settlers faced. After an introduction, the book is organized into nine chapters that address key topics. These include US courts not recognizing Hispanic land claims, submission of fraudulent Anglo land claims, Anglo intimidation to force land sales, and deceptive land grabs. Hispano settlers were often not considered US citizens, a condition reinforced by derogatory language from territorial leaders and newspaper editors. As incursion of Anglo miners into the San Juan mountains and Texas cattlemen into the San Luis Valley increased, vigilante justice took precedence over Hispano municipal (alcaldes) courts which were not recognized by Colorado. A lack of cultural understanding and communication led to distrust, resulting in military garrisons suspicious of Hispano allegiance to the USA, Hispano settlers not cooperating with census collection, taxes seen as unjust, and Hispanics scapegoated for crimes, leading to numerous lynchings. Colorado Territorial legislative sessions had no interpreters, laws were not translated into Spanish for representatives from southern Colorado, and the judicial process was not understood. In a somewhat tangential chapter, Sánchez relates the story of a corrupt federal agent who stole supplies procured for the Ute Indians. While seemingly not applicable to the tale of Hispanics, the result was that lack of supplies led starving Utes to raid settlers, with Hispanics disproportionately suffering losses. Petitions by Hispanics to remove the agent were unheeded, and he even went on to become Colorado’s first lieutenant governor. As a result of these many indignities, numerous petitions were made by both southern Colorado Hispanics and the New Mexico legislature at state and federal levels for Conejos and Costilla counties to rejoin New Mexico. The first petition came as early as 1862, the latest as recent as 1973!

For researchers interested in genealogy and background of individual Hispanic leaders from southern Colorado, Sánchez provides three appendices with helpful information. While Sánchez has provided a service useful to historical and cultural geographers interested in southern Colorado settlement, the overall effect of the book comes across as a compendium of woes. There is some conjecture throughout the book when Sánchez suggests conspiracies and speculates on possible explanations for several unanswered historical events. The effect is to sound like a one-sided list of grievances with at times an analytical stretch in interpretation. While this largely untold story from the Hispanic side is much needed, and this book speaks to historical injustices, there is little attempt to explain situations or events from other points of view. As an organizational tactic, Sánchez begins each chapter with a summary section, which is then followed by subsequent sections expanding on key themes. This results in a feeling of repetition, reading statements previously made in the same chapter.

Geographers might also be concerned about a seemingly weak spatial context and loose geographic accuracy. There is no geographic or historical archaeology research cited, although much has been published on New Mexican settlement in Colorado. Some geographic features are mis-located, allusions to gold strikes are vaguely mentioned without knowing where these occurred, and place characteristics are at times incorrect such as when Sánchez identifies the Pikes Peak region as the location for the 1859 gold rush, or when she suggests Tucson was influenced by New Mexico when in fact it was settled from and solidly connected to the Mexican state of Sonora. Surprisingly given Sánchez’ previous work on Hispanic settlements, she misinterprets a mayordomo (irrigation ditch administrator) as a ‘leader of an expedition’ (p. 20), and seemingly misrepresents Colorado water law to assert that priority users get as much water as they want (each user, in fact, has a fixed amount allocated). The book also suffers from a few copyedit mistakes, including misspellings, duplicate words in sentences, juxtaposition of surnames, and incorrect dates.

Despite the errors and loose geographic context, the overall contribution of Pleas and Petitions is a better understanding of the issues early Hispanic settlers faced in Colorado and a great contribution to the historical development of southern Colorado as a place. The critiques mentioned are minor; the knowledge gained about life for the initial, albeit marginalized settlers in territorial southern Colorado is substantial. No place is created without struggle, and