

# Anthropology Book Forum

Open Access Book Reviews

## Year in Review

We began writing Year in Reviews in 2019 to take a moment to reflect on the past year and share our plans for the future. This marks our fourth year, and we are more excited than ever for what is to come.

For those unfamiliar with the Anthropology Book Forum (ABF), it was founded by the American Anthropological Association as an experimental digital platform aimed at accelerating the scholarly book review process and expanding conversations around newly published work. As an [open access journal](#), committed to a set of principles that aims to reduce barriers to accessibility, the Forum publishes reviews of newly published work in multiple formats every Monday, 52 weeks a year. Based on the idea that book reviews are not just summaries of academic texts, but engagements with scholarship, ideas and authors, the Forum seeks to facilitate connections and exchange between authors and readers within and outside of anthropology. Working with over 100 publishers around the world, we continuously seek to make available a broad range of texts relevant to anthropological audiences, broadly conceived. With an online readership of around 3,000 per month, and a contributor base of 1300 and growing, we are constantly exploring and experimenting with new modes of engagement and new forms of written, audio and visual review formats.

Our [Facebook](#) page currently has over 2,600 followers, and we are in the process of expanding our website. With avid engagement, the Forum demonstrates that such spaces play a crucial role in facilitating a vibrant exchange of knowledge, particularly in a time increasingly characterized by exclusion and remote virtual connectivity brought on both by the pandemic and ongoing political, economic and academic boundaries.

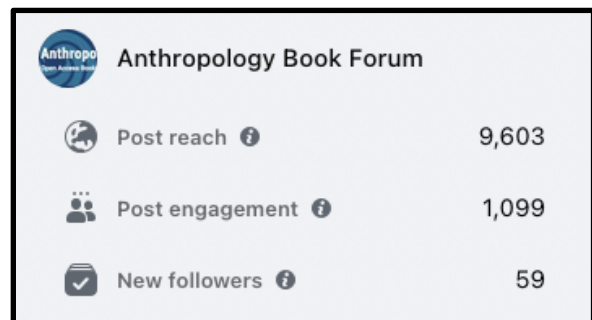


Image: Facebook post reach and engagement statistics. Our posts reach an audience of about 10,000 Facebook users each week.

In 2021, we moved to our [new home](#), a site dedicated entirely to the Forum. As the new site grows, it will facilitate the expansion of new review formats, cross-disciplinary conversations and a space for ongoing experimentation and dialogue.

## Looking Back: 2021 Year in Review

**“In their selection, the GAD Awards Committee recognizes the Anthropology Book Forum for the vision, commitment, and broad impact that diverse and accessible formats of anthropological knowledge offer multiple readerships within and outside the academy.”**

academia. It was an enormous honor to be recognized in this way, and we humbly thank the GAD Committee for considering the Forum for this award.

We continued publishing reviews over the past year on a regular basis that engage a great variety of topics within the current anthropological literature, and also published in some new review formats. We published one Author Book Talk, with Dr. Raja Swamy contextualizing his book *Building Back Better in India: Development, NGOs, and Artisanal Fishers after the 2004 Tsunami* (2021). We have published one Author Interview, featuring David Lancy interviewed about his 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *The Anthropology of Childhood* (2022) by Chantal Medaets, Gabriela Tebet, and Flávia

This year, the Anthropology Book Forum was awarded the 2022 New Directions Award (group category), presented by the General Anthropology Division, a sub-section of the American Anthropological Association.

The New Direction Award recognizes work that presents anthropological perspectives to publics beyond the academy across diverse forms of media, with methodological rigor and ethical engagement. You can read more about the award and view the original announcement [here](#).

This award means a lot for the Anthropology Book Forum, as a recognition that we are on the right path towards our aim of making anthropological knowledge as widely accessible as possible, to audiences within and outside of



Image: Editors Rasmus Rodineliussen and Emilia Group (right) accept the GAD Award from Kathryn Kozaitis (left) at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting 2022 in Seattle.

Pires. We were also able to continue providing audio options for many of our reviews, something we aim to expand in the coming year. If you are interested in volunteering your voice to provide an audio recording of a review, please contact us! Our goal is to provide audio options for all our reviews on the site.

### **Looking Forward: 2023**

In the coming year we will continue publishing reviews of current anthropological writing and media on a weekly basis. We aim to have a number of these reviews in audio format for increased accessibility, and we look forward to putting further emphasis on the conversational dimension of book reviews by publishing more Author Book Talks and Author Interviews.

The Forum remains open to different and experimental formats beyond the traditional book review as a way to engage with recent work. This year, we will be working to expand our Trajectories and Conversations sections:

**Conversations:** Published on a rolling basis, this venue will feature conversations around a particular theme invoked by a recent publication, for instance, a new definition of a concept like kinship or a novel regional perspective. We invite proposals from individuals who are interested in taking the lead on putting together a Conversation with at least five participants who can each offer their own perspective.

**Trajectories:** Similar to a review article, trajectories are between 1500 and 3000 words and attempt to succinctly tease out major themes in recent scholarship within a topic or subfield. For instance, this review may focus on recently published titles relevant to biological anthropology and suggest how these newly published texts are pushing the field in new directions, or perhaps, revisiting old debates.

Based on interest, we will also put out calls for reviews on specific themes or subjects that seem to be particularly present in recently published work. Currently, we are putting together a special edition on ritual for publication in mid-February, 2023, and are looking for reviews on books, films and other media that grapple with ritual. You can view the call for contributions [here](#).

**Call for Reviewers  
Special issue on ritual**

We are as always very much looking forward to engaging with our reviewers to find new modes of interacting and engaging with newly published work. If you have an idea that is not yet represented on our site, please get in touch!

Additionally, the Anthropology Book Forum will host a roundtable at the American Anthropological Association's Annual Meeting in Toronto 2023, where we will engage in an exercise of scholarly exchange based on the concept of the book review, and its role in bridging divides between academia and larger publics. Stay tuned for more information about this event, and for those of you planning to come to Toronto, please come join us. It will be an exciting conversation.

Lastly, we want to thank our readers, reviewers and publishers whose labor and interest make the project that is the Anthropology Book Forum possible. We also wish to extend a special thank you to Bridget Kelly-Vincz, Sheena Harris, and Janine McKenna for their enduring support of the Forum. We are confident that the Forum will continue to grow during the 2023 year and that we will, with your help, continue to offer a useful and dynamic resource for knowledge exchange.

Your editors,  
Rasmus Rodineliussen and Emilia Groupp

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