

ably had views that were on the political Left, and he sometimes mobilized science (especially in popular essays) to make arguments that were political. But in claiming that Gould's "science and politics grow naturally together as different facets of the same worldview" (p. 120), Prindle does little to explain the sources of that "worldview" or to contextualize the relationship between political beliefs and science. Prindle is content to characterize Gould's "science" by examining only his popular writings, and he mostly ignores Gould's substantial body of peer-reviewed literature in scientific journals. Of the paltry twenty-seven citations for Gould's work in the book's bibliography, only five are even arguably technical scientific papers. Prindle makes no mention of Gould's early work on allometry, his participation in studies of random simulation of evolution, or his involvement in the political struggle to establish paleobiology as a discipline. By failing to treat Gould's scientific career rigorously—and by largely ignoring Gould's participation in serious paleobiological scholarship during the 1960s and 1970s—Prindle misses a large portion of the intellectual and political context for Gould's later views on subjects like adaptation, contingency, and the tempo and mode of evolution.

In the end, Prindle's analysis of Gould's science and ideology is essentially circular. What do leftists believe? That humans are basically equal. Why did Gould promote a scientific theory in which human nature and social arrangements are contingent (along with the rest of the history of life)? Because he was a leftist. Unfortunately, after more than 200 pages Prindle never advances much beyond this initial, simplistic formulation. Were the book not also plagued by numerous additional instances of factual error and questionable interpretation, it might yet have some value in starting a conversation about an important subject. But as it stands, this book is not a trustworthy source for readers unfamiliar with Gould's work, and it offers little to serious scholars of the history of evolutionary biology.

DAVID SEPKOSKI

Sigrid Schmalzer. *The People's Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-Century China.* 336 pp., illus. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. \$85 (cloth).

The People's Peking Man is a pathbreaking and challenging study of the complex role that science has played in the social and epistemo-

logical negotiations between power-holders and the masses in modern China. To do its sophisticated argument justice, however, it is worth stating what the book is not before listing its many virtues. It is not, for instance, intended to be a straightforward history of paleoanthropology in China, though careful readers will find a thoughtful disciplinary account woven through the chapters. It is also not a history of science popularization *per se*, though the relationship between top-down dissemination of scientific knowledge in China and bottom-up "mass science" is a central issue. Instead, the book's heart lies in its analysis of human identity as a shared concern of scientists, laypersons, and the state. Under Mao Zedong's leadership, science became one of the few viable shelters for consideration of such topics, and Sigrid Schmalzer uses the vicissitudes of popular paleoanthropology to guide her readers through the chaotic political and cultural landscape of the Chinese Communist period.

The book begins by situating Peking Man in its pre-1949 context, where its discovery fit into available narratives of progressive evolution and human transformation, but had little impact in most non-scientific circles. For Chinese Communists, however, the story of human evolution perfectly illustrated Engels's claim that "labor created humanity," and many saw paleoanthropology as an opportunity to introduce Marxist materialism to the masses. Peking Man and other finds became key elements in a science dissemination (*kepu*) program designed to replace the superstitions of the masses with empirical, objective, and politically corrective views of humanity. As such, paleoanthropologists were charged with discussing fundamental questions of humanness that scholars in the "humanities" could not safely touch.

While *kepu* often relied on educated elites and assumed the false consciousness of the masses, more radical proponents of Maoist ideology still considered scientific expertise suspect from a class perspective. Instead of simply charting the uneasy relationship between *kepu* and mass science in terms of shifting political winds, Schmalzer frames it as a renegotiation of scientific identity, with paleoanthropologists casting themselves as workers in order to legitimize their special authority. She then attempts to gauge the limits of the Maoist vision of science by examining the late Cultural Revolution and assessing how consistently paleoanthropologists, workers, and the state embodied their own professed belief

in the materiality of labor as the basis of human progress.

Schmalzer's approach here will raise some eyebrows, but she makes clear that the Cultural Revolution period cannot be written off as a wasteland for science without more careful study. In fact, her chapters analyzing the post-Mao era suggest that, despite very different surface tendencies, pre- and post-1978 popular paleoanthropology share a fascination with human identity that cuts across any easy designation of expert, lay, or official. The idea that "labor created humanity" may have yielded ground to commercialized, sexualized, or nationalistic narratives that often revel in the strange and mysterious, but these new renditions still carve out much-needed spaces for asking what makes us human, where we fit in nature, and what being human actually means. The difference is that participation no longer needs to fall under the paradoxical banners of either attacking popular superstition or relying on the masses. In the author's view, the Maoist *kepu* project failed wherever it disregarded the complexity, centrality, and irreducibility of human identity, and though post-Mao discussions of Peking Man, Yeren ("wild man"), and others, are in many ways confirmation of Mao's worst fears, they are also poignantly authentic manifestations of his most populist dreams.

Schmalzer writes vividly and forcefully as both a historian and ethnographer, and she draws upon a diverse combination of sources that allows unexpected layers of meaning to coalesce around otherwise familiar statements and events. The very richness of her ideas and materials forces many questions to remain unanswered, and readers convinced of her thesis that human identity is a critical analytical category for understanding modern China will crave more historical explanations than she has space for in this volume. This is in fact a testament to the boldness of Schmalzer's vision, and her book makes a tremendous contribution to our picture of how science gets embedded in popular culture. If, along the way, she gently reminds us that many of the critical foci of contemporary science studies—material culture, labor, practice, social relations—share a pedigree (common ancestor?) with Mao-era preoccupations, that is just one more reason to think deeply about *The People's Peking Man*.

GRACE SHEN

Nicole Shukin. *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times*. (Posthumanities, 6.) viii + 306 pp., illus., index. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009. \$22.50 (paper).

Animal Capital addresses the virtual and representational rendering of animals for market consumption within the concepts of social theory, technology studies, and animal studies. Nicole Shukin posits that an understanding of animal-human interactions requires an in-depth examination of material culture of North America. She has selected three conceptual frames within which to do this: automobility, telemobility, and biomobility within the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

A detailed review of social theories in relation to animal studies is provided in the extensive introduction to the text. The works of Marx, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida are explicated within the context of animal fetishism, biopolitics, and alterism. A detailed discussion of the history of the concept of mimesis forms the basis of her thesis that within biopolitics, mimetic or representational rendering of the animal is the reality and basis of power. Readers unfamiliar with such works may find the associated semantics daunting, but Shukin's scholarship is evident throughout. She weaves a richly textured base for the specific explorations of material culture that follow.

Automobility integrates the development of Fordism with the abattoirs of the stockyards of Chicago and the use of gelatin as a photographic emulsion in the rendering of animal imagery. Her argument links the automated slaughter of pigs to the design of automobile assembly lines as well as to gelatin, the rendered waste of animal slaughter, which encodes the imagery of both automation and animal motion, thus becoming a form of animal capital.

Telemobility traces concepts of electronic and electric communication from Galvani's experiments on animal conduction to the electrocution of the elephant Topsy, the subsequent development of "humane" means of capital punishment, and on to the advertising campaigns of telecommunications in the twenty-first century. The Telus corporation's "critter" campaigns are analyzed as mimesis of animals in clinical research settings.

Biomobility explores the antipodal concepts of nature as unspoiled beauty, and nature as the source of pandemic death undermining society. A detailed critique of Gregory Colbert's itinerant and virtual exhibition *Ashes in Snow* is followed by a historical and social examination of the SARS epidemic in 2003 and the threat of