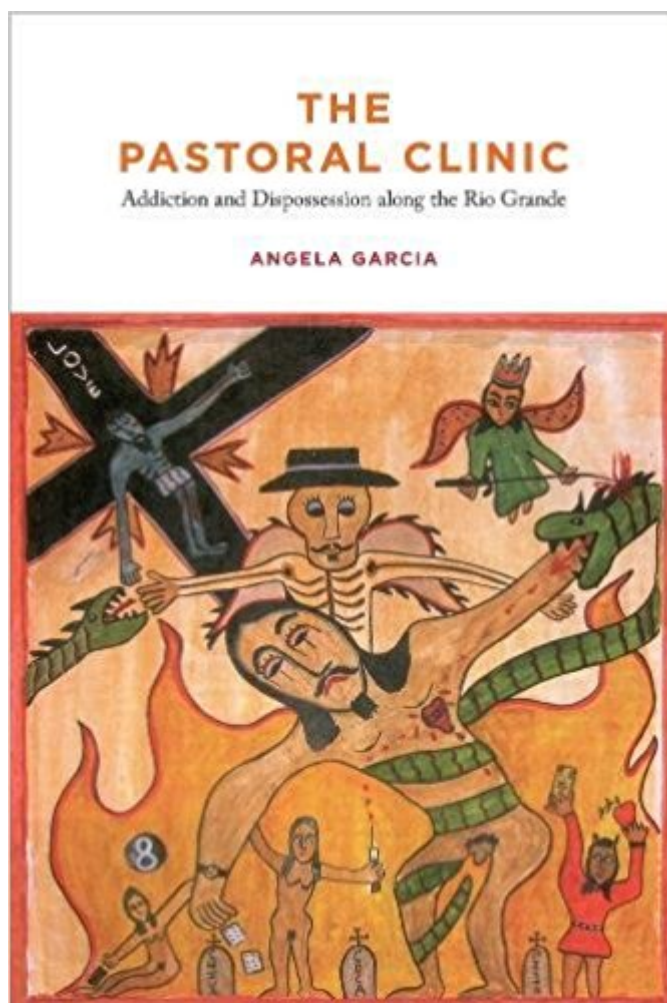


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The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction And Dispossession Along The Rio Grande



Synopsis

The Pastoral Clinic takes us on a penetrating journey into an iconic Western landscape—northern New Mexico’s Española Valley, home to the highest rate of heroin addiction and fatal overdoses in the United States. In a luminous narrative, Angela Garcia chronicles the lives of several Hispano addicts, introducing us to the intimate, physical, and institutional dependencies in which they are entangled. We discover how history pervades this region that has endured centuries of material and cultural dispossession, and we come to see its heroin problem as a contemporary expression of these conditions, as well as a manifestation of the human desire to be released from them. Lyrically evoking the Española Valley and its residents through conversations, encounters, and recollections, The Pastoral Clinic is at once a devastating portrait of addiction, a rich ethnography of place, and an eloquent call for a new ethics of care.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“A new and refreshing study. . . This is a powerful testament, and Garcia presents a vision of where we need to go when it comes to preventing the slow suicide of addictions.” • (The Progressive 2011-01-01) “Stunningly written and deeply intelligent. This is anthropology at its best.” • (American Anthropologist 2011-07-22)

“Timely, disturbing, and luminously written, The Pastoral Clinic is anthropology at its best, bringing into view a devastating piece of reality, highlighting larger processes and human singularities, and calling for a new public and ethics of care.”—João Biehl, author of Vita: Life in a Zone of

Social Abandonment" Garcia calls for a new ethics of care for heroin addicts, exposing the insufficiency and lack of continuity of rapidly privatizing faith-based services for the rural poor. Her heartfelt ethnography of the geography of addiction in New Mexico reveals how formerly agricultural communities and families find themselves painfully embedded in a land of dispossession and displacement with an unresolvable past, and an unlivable present."#151; Philippe Bourgois, author of Righteous Dopefiend" Angela Garcia has expanded the roots and basis of addictions to the great losses#151; personal, cultural, economic, of birthright and land#151; that few would dare to explore. I've sought a book like this for years, addressing my own addictions and those of the young men and women I've worked with for decades. A formidable thinker, a wrench-in-the-works activist inside and out of the industry, Angela understands that addictions are not a 'always has been and always will be' fate, but a collective, individual, and even 'intimate,' funneling into the web. And how the path toward healing, reconciliation, and wholeness is in the land, in the hand, and the capable heart of every addict and broken community."#151; Luis J. Rodriguez, author of Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in LA

First, I would like to commend David E.S. Stein for his very worthwhile and supportive review. In Stein's first paragraph while referencing EspaÃ ola, stated, "it is a region that few outsiders have taken the trouble to understand...." From my knowledge of EspaÃ ola I would have carried it further and stated "and fewer, if any, other than Angela Garcia, have ever taken the time and trouble to correct," All I had to hear was that Angela Garcia's book, The Pastoral Clinic, Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande, had established a connection between dispossession and heroin addiction to know that we might finally be at the cusp of making significant changes in the treatment regimen for heroin addiction. I grew up in EspaÃ ola; practiced law for twenty-five years; researched and published a book that deals specifically with the government's dispossession of the Spanish and Mexican land grants referred to in The Pastoral Clinic. I know first-hand of the disabling effect of such governmental maltreatment. I found The Pastoral Clinic to be a classic example of what is possible when one has the compassion and takes the time to walk the extra mile, as Angela Garcia did, to challenge the status quo--to attempt to save lives the government, from all appearances has concluded are unsalvageable. The Pastoral Clinic is a must read for every social scientist and federal, state and local government employee who is even obliquely involved in the process of resolving issues relating to heroin addiction: It should be mandatory reading for every student of the social sciences. Mike Scarborough Santa Fe

This is actually a really good book if it is required for your class

Beautifully written and compellingly haunting gaze into the social abyss of heroin addiction in New Mexico. There is a distinct feeling that Garcia really knows and cares for the people in this book in a transformatively painful manner. Read this book, you won't be disappointed.

As far as Anthropological texts go this has been the best I have ever read. Garcia is engaging and illustrative in her writing. Her book is not only very paced between chapters and narratives, but also in its analysis. Garcia does not get too bogged down in Psychological or Anthropological Theory (capital T variety) and the book is better for it. The book is not hampered by schools of thought and as a result focuses more on the individuals and their situation. Recommended for anyone interested in the topic or who is a fan of Anthro. books.

This book is highly informative and very well-written. Recommended for anyone interested in ethnography, anthropology, the history of the American southwest and its present-day legacies.

This is a must read for anyone interested in the human experience. Garcia gives rich ethnographic examples with a humanizing tone. If you or anyone you know is struggling with addiction I suggest reading this book. It will open your eyes to the many reasons people are what they are. If you love the southwest you will feel like you are there she is a great writer. The hardcore anthropological theory is there but done in an easy to swallow way.

I would give this a five star but the author leaves me with no solutions and that leaves me sad. However, such an ending also leaves one thinking, as this is a certainly a precursor situation to other communities, perhaps, and should not be treated lightly. To make it a five star read, you must read this book afterwards: A brilliant companion piece to her book is her husband's book, *Desert America* by Ruben Martinez, just released. The gaze of "the other" upon the cultural miasma of our border areas mixes paired, compared, contrasted thoughts and experiences of art, life, status, culture, landscape, urban, rural, ancient, modern through the metaphor of their shared vision out the window to various areas they have touched into deeply and removed, distant and up close. Both are very well written and highly engaging. The fact that they have twins makes this even more important in a pair of readings. *The New (old) West is Noir*.

Talks about the culture of heroin use in New Mexico. After a year of reading this book, I still find myself thinking about what Garcia has to say about addiction and family. Read as part of a freshman course in anthropology at UCLA.

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