

limited but valuable contribution to congregational literature.

The in-depth analyses of these 16 black megachurches provide a rare glimpse into the inner-workings of these congregations. While Barnes's book is academic in nature and relevant to sociologists of several specialties, she oftentimes assumes a biblical knowledge of her readers that would be more familiar to religion scholars or clergy. This is especially apparent when she examines the various theologies represented within black megachurches. Her book is aimed for an academic audience and contributes to the growing body of literature on black churches. It is especially relevant to sociologists of religion interested in religious culture formation, congregational studies, and social movements. However, the book is written in a clear and accessible way that may make it intriguing for church leaders interested in how theology manifests itself differently in both congregational focus and programming. This book could be used in an undergraduate or graduate course in the sociology of religion, as it provides a practical examination of how religious organizations navigate structural issues that are inconsistent with their theology.

Brandon C. Martinez
Baylor University

doi:10.1093/socrel/sru024

Advance Access Publication 21 May 2014



Home Is Where the School Is: The Logic of Homeschooling and the Emotional Labor of Mothering, by Jennifer Lois.
New York: New York University Press,
2013, 239 pp.; \$22.00 USD (paper).

Jennifer Lois's *Home Is Where the School Is* chronicles the lives of one of the most exalted yet misunderstood groups of women in contemporary U.S. society—

homeschooling mothers (HMs). Using in-depth longitudinal interviews, Lois sheds light on the emotional lives of homeschoolers and elucidates a number of core social psychological processes related to stigma, identity, social roles, and emotion management.

Although homeschooling is often portrayed, if not understood, as the purview of fundamentalist Christians or religious zealots, Lois's analysis reveals a broader spectrum of participants whose motivations have less to do with religion and more to do with definitions of what it means to be a good mother. Indeed, while Lois's sample did include individuals largely motivated by religious theology, it also included liberals with no religious affiliation, as well as mothers whose children had challenges that simply could not be met through more traditional means. Some of these women are "first choicers" (who chose homeschooling as a natural extension of mothering), whereas others are "second choicers" (who chose it as a last resort).

Relying heavily upon symbolic interaction as an organizing frame, Lois details how HMs often defend themselves against the stigma of emotional deviance (i.e., breaking the emotional norms associated with good mothering) by being too "emotionally intense" (71). Often accused of being academically arrogant, overprotective, morally self-righteous, extreme, and relationally hyperengaged, many HMs constructed accounts that allowed them to reframe their emotions as normal and reasonable, if not actually desirable and in line with "good mothering."

A good deal of Lois's analysis centers on the inequity inherent in homeschooling. Even more so than other family arrangements, homeschooling places wives and mothers in the home doing unpaid and all too often invisible labor, while placing husbands and fathers firmly in the role of breadwinner. Although all of the women in Lois's sample felt the role-strain and conflict inherent in homeschooling and the inequality that is in many ways exacerbated in homeschooling families, Christians whose

"first choice" was to homeschool seemed to have the easiest time dealing with their stress, anger, and frustration due to their ability to reframe their experience as God's will for them or their family.

HMs employed various strategies to manage experiences of role-strain and conflict. Many became more flexible in their roles and less concerned with the curriculum itself. Others changed their orientation toward time by focusing on the present, invoking the fleeting nature of childhood, and purposefully cultivating nostalgia.

Lois's book also attempts to address the million-dollar question: how do homeschooled children fare compared to children who attend schools outside of the home? While the answer is beyond her data, she illustrates that HMs' answers are no different, nor are they any more or less accurate, than those of parents who did not homeschool. HMs whose children had academic success often cited these achievements to justify their choice to homeschool; however, those whose children had not enjoyed academic success were more likely to point to their child's character or the quality of their relationships.

In the end, Lois found that many of the HMs in her study were stressed out, stigmatized, and exhausted. But after a five-year hiatus, during which Lois had her own children (neither of whom she homeschooled), most reported that they either missed homeschooling or had found ways to extend their careers either by having additional children or homeschooling their younger children or grandchildren.

As a social psychologist, I found this book theoretically rich and empirically fascinating. However, I feel compelled to add that I recently assigned this book in one of my classes, where the majority of students self-identified as "Christian," and one as being homeschooled. Whereas I appreciated Lois's candor regarding her own relationship to Christianity, my students viewed her account as overly biased and "unscientific." I add this addendum not as a real criticism to Lois, who is very clear in her role as an ethnographer, but to individuals who may want to teach this book in an undergraduate setting.

Home Is Where the School Is, fundamentally, is more about emotion management, social inequality, and social psychology than it is about religion. That said, emotions scholars have a long tradition of including their own emotional reactions in their work. Lois is not denigrating religion, but rather, she owns her biases and, in some cases, her lack of understanding. I am sure C. Wright Mills would agree that such an approach makes her inherently more, rather than less, credible. I will definitely use this book in class again, but I may begin with additional discussion about the role of emotion in fieldwork and the role of bias in social science research more generally.

Kathryn J. Lively
Dartmouth College

doi:10.1093/socrel/sru025
Advance Access Publication 21 May 2014